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THE OFFICIAL HISTORY OF AUSTRALIA IN THE WAR OF 1914-1918

VOLUME IX
THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY

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THE
ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY
1914-1918

5-25-70

BY

ARTHUR W. JOSE
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With 202 illustrations and maps

Second Edition

AUSTRALIA:
ANGUS & ROBERTSON LTD.
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1935

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PREFACE

THE scale on which this history depicts the operations of the Royal Australian Navy is subject—unfortunately but inevitably—to great variations. For this there are two reasons. In the first place, every naval history is bound to allot more space to the spectacular fighting which is a fleet's duty on rare occasions than to the continuous drudgery of patrol work, the search for enemy vessels which are not there (but which would be there if the patrols were not), that makes up at least nine-tenths of a naval war. It is clear that the historian cannot deal with this sort of naval work on the scale he would employ for a battle. He can only emphasize its necessity, use what language he has at command to depict its importance and its strain on the men who were engaged in it, and then pass on to more detailed description of the occasional fights that relieved the strain. Consequently, the short spectacular period of the Australian Navy's operations (roughly speaking, the first six months of the war) occupy a space in this book quite disproportionate to the value of the work done or the stress on the men who did it. The *Sydney's* fight with the *Emden* was a fine piece of work; not less fine, though of a different—and probably much more strenuous—character, was the same ship's, or the *Melbourne's,* or the *Australia's* share in the North Sea winter patrols.

This particular naval history suffers from a further disadvantage. After the first six months of war, the ships of the Australian Navy were not acting together or under a single command. They formed part of various squadrons in different seas, under direct Admiralty control, and engaged in operations about which only the Admiralty knows the whole truth. The Admiralty alone can judge what should be disclosed and what kept still hidden. In time, no doubt, the British history of the naval war will be written as fully as is advisable. After all, wars are not yet beyond the possibility of recurrence, and all the secrets of national defence cannot be announced to the world at large. For an Australian historian, therefore,

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it would be not only unwise but disloyal to write without reserve about matters which the Admiralty still keeps secret.

It remains to be said that, while this history appears under official auspices and all available official sources have been used to ensure the utmost possible accuracy of fact, the opinions expressed in it are (unless explicitly attributed to others) those of the author and not necessarily of anyone else. These opinions have not been lightly expressed or casually formed—no author working under official auspices could so shirk his duty—but the responsibility for their formation and expression lies solely and wholly with the present writer.

For assistance in this work the author's thanks are due to the authorities of the Navy Office and of the Australian War Memorial, and to many members of the navy and of the merchant service. It was almost entirely through the spontaneous and public-spirited efforts of Commander R. C. Garsia, R.A.N. (himself a participator in the *Sydney-Emden* action and the campaign in the North Sea), that the records of the oversea service of several of His Majesty's Australian ships attained their present measure of adequacy. In his references to the French the author has been generously aided by M. Claude Farrère, part author of *Combats et Batailles sur Mer;* valued assistance has also been obtained from those responsible for the naval archives of Great Britain, France, and Germany. The record of the Australian mercantile marine has been collated by Mr. A. W. Bazley of the Official Historian's staff. The majority of the marginal maps were drawn by Mr. P. R. Wightman, and the remainder by Mr. W. S. Perry.

Armistice Day, 1926.

A. W. J.

NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

The emergence—from British, French, and German sources—of certain data which, unfortunately, were not available to the author (who is now in Europe), has rendered additional revision necessary. This has been effected with as little alteration as possible, whether of the narrative or of the views expressed, but not without delay.

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CHRONOLOGY

(*Italic* type indicates events dealt with in this volume.)

1914.

June 28—Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria.
July 28—Austria declares war on Serbia.
Aug. 1—Germany declares war on Russia.
„ 3—Germany declares war on France.
„ 4—Germany invades and declares war on Belgium; Great Britain declares war on Germany.
„ 10—Recruiting for the A.I.F. opens.
„ 12—*H.M.A.S. "Sydney" and destroyers raid Blanche Bay.*
„ 19—*A.N. & M.E.F. leaves Sydney.*
„ 23—Japan declares war on Germany and blockades Tsingtao.
„ 28—Battle of Heligoland Bight.
Sept. 6—Battle of the Marne begins.
„ 10—*German cruiser "Emden" first raids in the Bay of Bengal.*
„ 11—*A.N. & M.E.F. lands in New Britain.*
„ 14—Battle of the Aisne begins.
„ 17—Third Fisher Government takes office.
„ 22—*Aboukir, Cressy,* and *Hogue* torpedoed in North Sea.
Nov. 1—Battle of Coronel.
„ 3—Yarmouth bombarded by German cruisers.
„ 7—Japanese capture Tsingtao.
„ 9—*"Emden" destroyed by H.M.A.S. "Sydney."*
Dec. 4—First A. & N.Z. contingent reaches Egypt.
„ 8—Battle of the Falkland Islands.
„ 16—Hartlepool bombarded by German warships.

1915.

Jan. 19—First Zeppelin raid on England.
„ 24—Battle of the Dogger Bank.
Feb. 17—*H.M.A.S. "Australia" joins the Grand Fleet.*
March 14—German cruiser *Dresden* sunk by British warships.
April 25—Allies land on Gallipoli Peninsula.
May 7—*Lusitania* torpedoed off S.W. coast of Ireland.
„ 27—Sir Henry Jackson appointed First Sea Lord.
Aug. 6—Launching of August offensive in Gallipoli.
Oct. 27—First Hughes Government takes office.
Dec. 20—Evacuation of Anzac and Suvla Bay.

1916.

Jan. 11—German raider *Moewe* reported in Atlantic.
March 1 to May 4—First German "unlimited" submarine campaign.
April 25—German naval raid on Yarmouth and Lowestoft.
May 31-June 1—Battle of Jutland.

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1916.

June —Australian Government purchases fifteen British steamers.
July 1—First Battle of the Somme begins.
„ 9—Surrender of German forces in S.W. Africa.
Aug. 4-5—Battle of Romani.
„ 19—Sortie of German High Sea Fleet.
Oct. 6—*H.M.A.S. "Melbourne" joins the Grand Fleet.*
„ 31—*H.M.A.S. "Sydney" joins the Grand Fleet.*
Nov. 14—Second Hughes Government takes office.
„ 26—German naval raid on Lowestoft.
„ 29—Sir John Jellicoe becomes First Sea Lord and Sir David Beatty takes over the Grand Fleet.
„ 30—*German raider "Wolf" leaves Kiel.*
Dec. 21—*German raider "Seeadler" leaves Germany.*

1917.

Feb. 1—German "unrestricted" submarine campaign renewed.
„ 17—Australian National War Government takes office.
March 12—Russian revolution begins.
„ 17—German destroyers shell Ramsgate.
„ 22—*Moewe* returns to Germany from her second raid.
April 6—U.S.A. declares war on Germany.
„ 11—Battle of Bullecourt begins.
May 15—American destroyer flotilla arrives in British waters.
June 7—Battle of Messines begins.
„ 13—Big German aeroplane raid on London in daylight.
July 3—*"Wolf" lays mine-field off Gabo Island.*
„ 31—Third Battle of Ypres begins.
Oct. 14—*Australian destroyers begin patrolling in Adriatic.*
Nov. 8—Lenin's *coup d'état* at Petrograd.
Dec. 9—British capture Jerusalem.
„ 26—Sir Rosslyn Wemyss becomes First Sea Lord.

1918.

Feb. 16—*"Wolf" returns to Germany.*
March 21—German offensive in Picardy begins.
April 23—*British naval raid on Zeebrugge and Ostend.*
Aug. 8—British advance in Picardy begins.
Sept. 19—Final British advance in Palestine begins.
Oct. 31—Hostilities with Turkey cease.
Nov. 3—Armistice with Austria Hungary. Naval mutiny at Kiel.
„ 11—Armistice with Germany signed.
„ 21—*German Fleet surrenders.*

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INTRODUCTION

THIS volume of the War Histories is concerned with the doings of an infant navy. On a bright, calm October day in 1913 the *Australia* passed in between Port Jackson Heads. Well within the year she passed out again to the war, and had captured German colonies and driven a German squadron out of the western Pacific before October came round again. By February of the next year the Australian Squadron was scattered over the oceans—*Australia* in the North Sea, *Melbourne* in the North Atlantic, *Sydney* in the South Atlantic, *Encounter* in the Pacific; the destroyers in New Guinea waters, the remaining submarine in the Ægean, and *Pioneer* on the coast of East Africa.

This navy, moreover, was not only an infant; it was a new type of navy altogether. Other navies are the sea-guard of independent nations; this was owned, maintained, and as far as possible manned by a Dominion, an isolated segment of the Empire, which had grown too proud to accept from Great Britain—whether *gratis* or for pay—the whole of its own sea defences. There may be other Dominion navies before long; this of Australia's owning was the first of them. And because it was the first—and because, in a war that caught it half-trained and wholly inexperienced, it thoroughly justified its existence and did honour to its creators—it seems natural to preface the actual story of the Royal Australian Navy's work with a sketch of its origins and early development.

The first efforts of any Australian Government to provide for local naval defence were inspired by the Crimean War, during which news reached Sydney that a Russian frigate was cruising off Cape Horn, four more were (or were expected) at Valparaiso, and fourteen other warships were at Vladivostock. In view of this news Sydney, which felt more or less secure under the protection of the British squadron, built itself a gunboat—the *Spitfire,* a wooden ketch of 65 tons, with a 32-pounder gun mounted astern. Melbourne, which saw less of the British squadron and was just then storing and exporting great quantities of gold, ordered an armed vessel from England; this—the *Victoria,* a 580-ton screw-steamer armed with six 32-pounders and a 9 ft. 6 in. swivel

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gun—reached Hobson's Bay in 1856.[1] Nine years later the Victorian Government built a "gun-raft" to carry a 68-pounder gun, and, having acquired the habit, obtained from England in 1868 an old cut-down battleship (the *Nelson*, launched in 1814, converted in 1854 into a two-decker screw steamship, and armed with forty-six guns of small calibre), and in 1871 a then very up-to-date turret-ship, the *Cerberus*, carrying four 18-ton guns.

Apart from these spasmodic efforts, and an abortive proposal of 1869 for a naval force in Australian waters whose expenses would be equally shared by Britain and the colonies it was to defend, the idea that any authorities outside London were concerned with naval defence does not seem to have entered anyone's head until Lord Carnarvon (then Secretary for the Colonies) in 1876 chose Sir William Jervois and Colonel (afterwards Sir Peter) Scratchley to discuss the question of colonial defence with the various Australian Governments. A series of reports followed, the essential points of which—as far as naval defence was concerned—were that offensive action at sea must be left entirely to the British Navy; that the main local defence should be provided by shore batteries on the principal harbours and estuaries; and that the richer colonies might provide, in addition, a few swift ironclad gunboats for the protection of coastal commerce, and a few torpedo-boats or launches to assist the shore batteries. All floating defences must be put under the direct supervision of the officer in command of the Australian Squadron, which was then, of course, a part of the British Navy; but locally provided vessels would be manned by locally established Naval Brigades.

On these proposals as a whole no action was taken. Colonial governments in those days were more or less ephemeral, and the policy of one Ministry, even in defence measures, had no hold on its successors. Nor was public opinion quite ready for so definite a scheme. In 1881, at an inter-colonial conference, the Premier of South Australia moved a resolution reviving the proposal of 1869; but the

[1] This ship was eventually sold in 1888 and broken up in 1894. Another *Victoria*, a gunboat, was procured by the Victorian Government in 1884 (together with the gunboat *Albert*) and was sold to the Government of Western Australia in 1896.

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four eastern colonies rejected it in favour of a motion declaring that,

considering the large Imperial interests involved, the naval defence of these colonies should continue to be the exclusive charge of the Imperial Government, and the strength of the Australian Squadron should be increased.

The conference did admit, however, that the land defence of the several ports was a local affair.

Nevertheless, several of the colonies took hints from the Scratchley proposals, and began to develop naval forces of their own. New South Wales already had its Naval Brigade, largely made up of time-expired petty officers and men of the Royal Navy, and designed to reinforce the vessels of the Australian Squadron in emergencies or to man auxiliary craft in time of war. In 1881 the old screw-corvette *Wolverene*, formerly flagship on the station, was presented to the colony by the Admiralty as a training ship for the local brigade; but this vessel was never fully equipped or commissioned, and the training was mostly of the "Easter manœuvres" type. Victoria, which still had the *Cerberus* and the *Nelson*, added to its fleet between 1881 and 1885 two slow gunboats and three torpedo-boats; and in 1884 Queensland and South Australia began to create their own naval establishments, the one commissioning two gunboats and a torpedo-boat, the other obtaining a small but heavily armed cruiser, the *Protector*.

About this time the British Government decided that it might with reason ask the colonies more pressingly to take over some share of the responsibility for their own defence by sea. Accordingly Admiral Tryon was appointed to the command of the Australian Squadron (a position previously held by officers of lower rank), and was instructed to discuss the whole question with the Australian Premiers. The details of this discussion matter little; what does matter is the solution of the problem which Sir George Tryon then discovered and formulated. In 1886 he wrote to Sir Samuel Griffith, then Premier of Queensland:—

It is not a mere subsidized force that will do what is wanted. *It is not only money that is required to produce effective forces, but the personal service of our countrymen all over the world.* . . . To awaken the true spirit, the Government of each colony . . . should manage (as far as possible) their local forces during times of peace.

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Unless they do so, the burden of cost will be irksome, and the interest of the people in their maintenance—which is a first factor for success—will not be evoked.

From that basic principle sprang the Royal Australian Navy.

The discussions conducted by Sir George Tryon bore some fruit at a conference of colonial premiers held in London in 1887. At this an arrangement was concluded for the better defence of Australasian waters, whereby "an auxiliary squadron of five fast third-class cruisers and two torpedo-gunboats" was to be provided by Great Britain, the Australasian colonies paying interest on the cost of construction and sharing in the cost of maintenance. The duty specially assigned to this squadron was the protection of floating trade in a carefully defined area round Australasia, and only the explicit permission of the colonial governments could free them for work beyond that area; but within it they were to be controlled by the officer commanding on the station. It was further stipulated (*a*) that the Australian Squadron of the Royal Navy must be maintained at its normal strength; (*b*) that of the auxiliary squadron three cruisers and one gunboat must be kept in permanent commission, and the rest in reserve at some port in Australasia; (*c*) that the existing local forces, and any future additions to them, remained outside the agreement, and under the sole control of their own governments. No special provision was made for training Australian ratings, though some local authorities seem to have understood that training would be given somehow.

Considering this agreement in the light of Admiral Tryon's formula, it will be seen that the two by no means coincide. The auxiliary squadron was in fact exactly such a subsidised force as he deprecated. Indeed, the ideal he painted—a squadron locally manned, and in peace-time locally controlled—was obviously unrealisable while the Australasian colonies were split up among seven mutually independent governments. But the premiers who accepted the 1887 agreement looked on it as only the beginning of a more definitely Australian force. Thus Sir Henry Parkes, then Premier of New South Wales, told his Parliament that the new squadron would be "a fleet peculiarly our own," and his colleague Bernhard Wise followed him with the declaration that it was "as much a

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part of the coastal defences of Australia as are the fortifications at South Head." Ratification of the agreement therefore followed as a matter of course in 1888—Queensland alone delaying her assent till 1891—on condition that it should continue for ten years certain, and then lapse only after a clear two years' notice on either side.

In October, 1891, the new ships arrived, and were in a short time absorbed into the Australian Squadron. Occasionally, when rumours of war disturbed the quiet, and someone unauthorisedly suggested that the squadron might be called elsewhere and might take the auxiliary vessels with it, members of Parliament asked indignant questions and the public betrayed uneasiness. Otherwise the agreement was carried out placidly, and as part of the normal machinery of government. Australia had its local troubles just then, notably the financial crisis of 1892-3, which depleted the Treasuries and made Governments unwilling to consider any schemes that might necessitate fresh expenditure. All through the nineties, too, Federation was occupying the attention of politicians and publicists of any eminence; defence, though an essential part of the Federation problem, could be left over till the main issues had been decided.

II

When in 1901 the Commonwealth came into being, the 1887 agreement and its monetary obligations were necessarily taken over by the Federal authorities. It so happened that Australian warships—the *Protector* and the three from the auxiliary squadron—had just before (in 1900) taken part in the Boxer war in China, and Victoria and New South Wales had sent contingents drawn from their local naval forces. Public opinion about naval matters, thus stimulated, was not by any means unanimously in favour of sharing Britain's responsibilities outside Australian waters. A representative number of politicians took the view that the affairs of China were a purely British and commercial interest, with which Australia should not be concerned.

On the other hand, the British Government was equally disturbed about the agreement. The limitations under which British admirals handled the auxiliary squadron were disagreeable both to the admirals and to the Admiralty. As Sir

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George Clarke (now Lord Sydenham) wrote later, "the great majority of commanders would prefer to be spared the co-operation of squadrons of craft over which they had not absolute control." The Admiralty, therefore, found it necessary to take the colonies seriously, and proceeded to develop its strategic creed for their enlightenment in a series of propositions somewhat as follows:—

I. Naval defence cannot be a matter of merely local interest.

II. Naval defence consists mainly of a general offensive, designed to destroy the enemy ships wherever they may be.

III. Since "the seas are one," this offensive must be under a single control; therefore there must be a single Imperial Navy.

When in 1902 the colonial premiers were again summoned to a conference in London, the first business brought under their notice was concerned with the naval defence of the Empire; the Admiralty contributed a memorandum setting forth fully the views just summarised, and Lord Selborne, then First Lord, in his speech to the conference, strongly emphasised the necessity of single control. At the same time he made skilful use of a reference to the Tryon principle. The auxiliary squadron, he said, was merely hired, establishing between Australia and Britain only the relation "of the man who pays to the man who supplies," and giving Australians no sense either of personal interest or of personal possession (in this, of course, he was misinformed). He suggested, therefore, that in the reorganisation of the scheme the factor of personal service, on which Admiral Tryon had so insisted, should be introduced by providing that "at least one, if not two, cruisers should be manned exclusively by Australasians under the command of Imperial officers," and that these ships should be occasionally interchanged with ships of other squadrons. He also suggested the formation of colonial branches of the Royal Naval Reserve. Finally, he insisted on the futility of confining the activities of the auxiliary squadron within narrow geographical limits, and asked that they should be in future made automatically available for service anywhere in the Eastern seas.

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A series of discussions, both in the conference and at the Admiralty, made it plain that not all the colonial premiers could be persuaded to unite on any single scheme; but the Australian and New Zealand representatives (Sir E. Barton, Sir John Forrest, and Richard Seddon) were at last so persuaded, and the 1887 arrangements were completely remoulded. The distinction between the Australian Squadron and the auxiliary squadron was abolished. The Admiralty bound itself to maintain a squadron of defined strength in the western Pacific, based on Australian ports and controlled by the officer commanding on the Australian station, but free to be used in operations anywhere within the bounds of the Australian, China, and East Indies stations. The cost of this squadron was to be shared in the following proportions:—Britain, one-half; Australia, five-twelfths; New Zealand, one-twelfth; but the Australian payment must not exceed £200,000 a year. Three drill-ships and one other were to be manned as far as possible with Australians and New Zealanders, and officered by R.N. and R.N.R. officers. Eight cadetships in the Royal Navy were allotted annually to Australia, and two to New Zealand. Branches of the Royal Naval Reserve were to be established in both Dominions.

The new features of this agreement need careful study, for from the objections raised to them the genuine Australian Navy at last took shape. Their novelty does not seem to have been appreciated in London; a distinguished official of the Colonial Office, writing ten years later, described the 1902 agreement as merely an "extension" of the 1887 agreement.[2] In actual fact (though the opportunities offered for personal service were a real gain) Lord Selborne had destroyed even the cash nexus, the relationship of hirer and lessor, which he had condemned as too impersonal, and had substituted a mere subsidy—a system against which Australians had protested in and since 1887. They had been jealous, and often selfish, over the use of the auxiliary squadron; but that very selfishness shows that they did regard it—whatever information Lord Selborne thought he had to the contrary—as a "personal possession." The new squadron was not theirs at all; nay, it was deliberately assigned for Imperial duties in the very

[2] Keith's *Responsible Government in the Dominions*, p. 1277.

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sphere—the China seas—to which a large body of Australians had already taken grave objection. When the agreement was laid before the Australian Parliament to be confirmed, the general dissatisfaction was given voice to on both sides of the House; not only George Reid, the Leader of the Opposition, but Alfred Deakin, an important member of the Ministry whose chief had concluded the agreement, made public their objections to the system of defence by subsidy. Mr. Reid had a freer hand, and his clear and precise statements are worth quoting:—

> In the 1887 agreement . . . we have clearly brought out the idea, first of an Imperial squadron in the ordinary sense, such as they have on the China, or East Indian, or Northern Pacific stations, and then an Australian squadron . . . to be an additional defence for the purpose of protecting the trade in Australian waters.
>
> The agreement of 1887 . . . sets out a partnership in Australian defence, whereas the Bill under discussion sets out a partnership in Imperial defence. . . . I altogether repudiate the attempt which is obviously being made to change the position and relationship of the Commonwealth to the Imperial Government in matters of Imperial policy.
>
> Australia's contribution is infinitely less than we should like to make it, but I cannot shut my eyes to the mode which has been adopted of initiating this increased contribution. If this agreement had been submitted to the people in 1887, I maintain that it would have been scouted.

After an exceptional display of parliamentary manœuvring the agreement was confirmed, but the prestige of the Barton Ministry was impaired; and at the ensuing elections several of its candidates were defeated, and all were hampered, because of their action in voting for the new arrangement.

III

In the course of the speech from which quotations have just been made, Reid also said:—

> If I thought this agreement was to be made use of to interfere in any sense with the vigorous development of our naval brigades, I should vote against it. I should think myself absolutely disloyal to the country if I did not do so.

The naval brigades of the Australian colonies just before Federation were probably almost valueless as active forces, though they had provided the volunteer forces that served in China in 1900. But their mere existence proved invaluable to the Commonwealth, both because through long periods of

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neglect and discouragement they maintained the belief in personal service, and because, when public dissatisfaction with the 1902 agreement became pronounced, they provided the germ of a constructive counter-proposal.

During the nineties they had almost ceased to exist. The financial crisis referred to above[8] had induced various Treasurers, avid of retrenchment, to cut down to a minimum the cost of local defence. In Victoria and Queensland the gunboats were put out of commission, and the personnel reduced; South Australia placed the *Protector* in reserve; New South Wales—where few people saw the need of local naval forces as long as the Imperial naval station was located in Port Jackson—decided not to replace the *Wolverene* (which had been broken up in 1889), and so starved the local brigade that it had to struggle along under grievous difficulties. But it, like its fellows in the other colonies, did struggle along, and their officers never lost heart.

Just before Federation was definitely accomplished, in the winter of 1899, the naval commandants of four colonies joined the secretary of the Victorian Defence Department in drawing up a report of great importance. Basing their recommendations avowedly on Admiral Tryon's ideas, they asked for means whereby the existing local forces should be made "efficient and available for service in vessels of war." They said:

> When the auxiliary squadron was first established by agreement between the colonies and the Admiralty, it was generally understood, *in Australia at any rate,* that the ships would form a means of drilling and training Australian seamen. This expectation has never been realised, the vessels in reserve having always been laid up in Sydney, and no attempt has been made to utilise them for the benefit of the local naval forces.

Consequently, they pointed out, there had been no advance in the ability of Australian forces to undertake any honourable share in the sea defence of their own country, while

> the present policy, namely that of the payment in specie in return for naval defence furnished *in toto* by the mother-country, makes no advance whatever.

They proposed, therefore, (*a*) that the various colonial naval forces should be amalgamated into a single Federal force; (*b*) that the Admiralty should be asked to provide ships of a type effective for service in time of war, in which the

[8] *See p. xix.*

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local force could be drilled in time of peace. They calculated that the actual expenditure on local native forces, *plus* the contribution under the 1887 agreement, would suffice to maintain five of these "ships effective in war" (they suggested the use of second-class cruisers), as well as a reserve large enough both to man the five in war-time and to supply reinforcements to, and make up wastage in, the Imperial squadron.

This report was obviously intended for consideration by the new Federal Government, whenever it should come into existence. Before that happened, Australia found itself engaged in the South African War and the Boxer War, and schemes of reorganisation were put aside. Early in 1902, however, before the Colonial Conference of that year had been arranged, a report from the Naval Commandant in Queensland (Captain Creswell[4]) revived the suggestion of 1889, but with one important alteration. Instead of begging the training-ships from the Admiralty, he advised the Federal Government to provide its own; four 3,000-ton cruisers for training the local forces, a training-ship for boys, and a navigation school for naval reservists. The cruisers would be manned by reduced crews in peace-time, and raised to war-strength when necessary from the naval reserve, so as to form a reserve squadron for the Imperial squadron. It was estimated that the cost would not exceed current naval expenditure if one ship was built every second year.

This report also was shelved, since the agreement of 1902 overshadowed and superseded it. But in the debates on that agreement it was frequently quoted and discussed, with the result that in the Validation Act a clause was specially inserted whereby "purely Australian naval defence forces" were explicitly maintained in addition to the new Imperial squadron. "Such Australian forces," said the Act, "ships, and armament as may be approved by Parliament shall be maintained by the Commonwealth and be solely under its control." Further, while all discussion of naval defence schemes was for a time neglected in favour of urgent internal reforms (*e.g.*, compulsory arbitration), the author of the 1902 report was in 1904 deliberately promoted by George Reid—then Prime Minister—to be Director of the Commonwealth Naval Forces.

[4] Vice-Admiral Sir W. R. Creswell, K.C.M.G., K.B.E.; R.A.N. First Naval Member of the Australian Naval Board, 1911/19; of Silvan, Vic.; b. Gibraltar, 20 July, 1852. Died 20 Apr., 1933.

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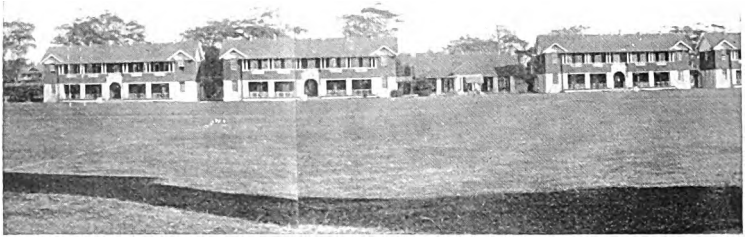
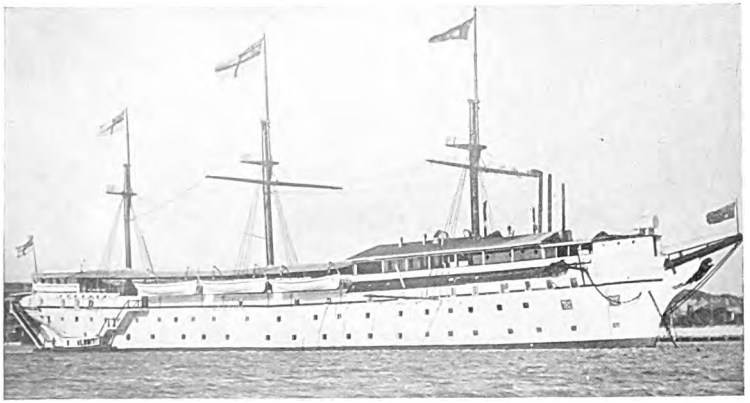


CADETS' QUARTERS AT THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVAL COLLEGE, JERVIS BAY

Lent by R.A.N. College.



H.M.A.S. *Tingira*, TRAINING SHIP FOR BOYS, IN ROSE BAY, SYDNEY

Taken by W. A. Shearon, Esq.
Aust. War Memorial Collection No. A2605.

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At this moment the Commonwealth Naval Forces consisted of about 1,000 men (nine-tenths of them engaged on a militia basis) and a few hundred cadets; the ships available were *Cerberus* (launched in 1869), *Protector* (1884), gunboats *Gayundah* (1884), *Paluma* (1884); first-class torpedo-boats *Countess of Hopetoun* (1891), *Childers* (1883); second-class torpedo-boats *Nepean* (1884), *Lonsdale* (1884), *Mosquito* (1885), and two launches.

Of these the *Protector* was used for training men from New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia; the two gunboats fulfilled the same office in Queensland. The Victorian torpedo-boats, possibly mothered by the *Cerberus*, formed (to quote the Naval Commandant in 1905) "the nearest approach we possess to a defence required by modern conditions." In these circumstances Captain Creswell boldly put before the Federal Government an enlarged scheme for spending nearly two millions sterling on a squadron of

3 cruiser destroyers of 3,000 tons each,
16 torpedo-boat destroyers of 550 tons each,

and five first-class and eight second-class torpedo-boats. The reply of the Government was to send him to England to study the latest naval developments; and in August, 1906, he put forward revised proposals which, when slightly enlarged by a committee of Australian naval officers, asked for

3 ocean destroyers of 1,300 tons each,
1 ocean destroyer of 800 tons,
16 coastal destroyers of 550 tons each,
4 first-class torpedo-boats of 157 tons each.

Meanwhile a third party had taken a hand in the discussion. In 1905 Deakin, then Prime Minister, had pointed out to the Imperial Government that the 1902 agreement "is not, and has never been, popular in the Commonwealth," mainly because—

> At present we are without any visible evidence of our participation in the naval force towards which we contribute. Our £200,000 a year would seem in part repaid if we were enabled to take a direct and active part in the protection of our shores and shipping. But as we have no identification with the squadron . . . there is so far nothing naval that can be termed Australian, or even Australasian. No Commonwealth patriotism is aroused while we merely supply funds that disappear in the general expenditure of the Admiralty.

He therefore suggested, tentatively, active naval co-operation in the form of—(*a*) the local provision of defended coaling

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stations on the Australian coast; (*b*) a subsidy to mail-ships of a type "capable of being employed economically and at the shortest notice in the event of war." Captain Creswell's scheme of 1905 was also sent to London, and it was arranged that the whole subject should be dealt with by the Committee of Imperial Defence.

The report of this committee, received during July, 1906, was in several ways a shock to Australians. It described a possible raid on Australia as of "secondary importance"—a statement true enough from an Imperial standpoint, but injudicious as an argument addressed to Australians, who after all were only asking to be allowed to defend themselves. It dismissed Captain Creswell's proposed destroyer flotilla as lacking strategical justification—an opinion that was of course a matter for experts, and might have been accepted—but it unfortunately added—

> If in the future strategical conditions should ever so far alter as to necessitate the provision of warships of this type in Australian waters, it would devolve upon the Admiralty to provide them.

That observation, though the committee probably had no such intention, was interpreted in Australia as a deliberate snub. It would have been so easy to say "Destroyers are not needed now, but if they ever are we shall welcome your offer to provide them"; what was said was "You are wrong now, and even should you be right you cannot be trusted to do anything."

It was as an answer to this report that the proposals of the Australian naval officers' committee, already described, were formulated. Nor was this answer as rashly audacious as might be thought; for while in May, 1906, the Imperial Committee told Australia that the employment of a destroyer flotilla to defend her coasts in the absence of the squadron was "opposed to every sound principle of naval strategy," in May, 1905, it had (through one of its members, Arthur Balfour) assured the British Parliament that "twenty-four destroyers, and no less than ninety-five more torpedo craft," were available for British coastal defence in the absence of "organised fleets." It seemed, therefore, to the Australian mind that British practice was just as well worth following as British principles; and on this basis the flotilla of twenty-four torpedo craft was planned for, with a personnel of 2,000 and at an

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annual maintenance cost of about £170,000. Mainly for financial reasons, Deakin did not adopt these proposals as a whole, but marked his approval of them by immediately asking Parliament to let him obtain, within the next three years, eight of the coastal destroyers and the four first-class torpedo-boats. He also despatched two local naval officers to England to procure for the Government all the information necessary to carry out this programme, and invited to Australia a leading naval architect who was a member of the Admiralty committee on designs.

In 1907 the Prime Minister himself went to England to attend an Imperial Conference, and brought back a new set of proposals drawn up by the Admiralty; these omitted all the destroyers, and substituted nine submarines, with six first-class torpedo-boats. This scheme was vigorously opposed by the Director of Naval Forces and by the two officers who had been sent to England, with the result that both Parliament and the public were driven into a strong suspicion of proposals emanating from London, and took up the attitude that, though something must be done, they were not prepared to let the Government do what it liked without supervision. Accordingly, when a sum of £250,000 became available for local naval construction, Parliament simply ear-marked it on condition that no building should be undertaken without specific parliamentary approval.

In August, 1908, a fresh stimulus was supplied to Australian desires for a local squadron by the visit of the United States Fleet on its voyage round the world. While many Englishmen feared—and some American journalists seem to have hoped—that this visit would induce Australia to look for sympathy and support in the future to the United States, nothing was further from the Australian mind. The moral that Australians drew was simply that they must have a fleet of their own. Two of the Prime Minister's utterances during the visit deserve special notice, because they summed up so precisely the feelings of his countrymen:—

> But for the British Navy there would be no Australia. That does not mean that Australia should sit still under the shelter of the British Navy—those who say we should sit still are not worthy of the name of Briton. We can add to the squadron in these seas from our own blood and intelligence something that will launch us on the beginning of a naval career, and may in time create a force which shall rank among the defences of the Empire. . . .

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We live in hopes that from our own shores some day a fleet will go out not unworthy to be compared in quality, if not in numbers, with the magnificent fleet now in Australian waters.

In November of this year Deakin left office, and was succeeded by Andrew Fisher at the head of a Labour Ministry. The newcomer almost at once clarified the situation by adopting the twenty-four destroyers scheme and ordering three to be built forthwith. By the following March the Labour programme had developed greatly; Fisher's policy speech enumerated

the building of four Ocean destroyers and sixteen "River" class destroyers, besides those already ordered, within three years. All these are to be built in Australia. . . . This flotilla is to take over the responsibility of coastal defence, and will relieve the Admiralty of the cost of the present squadron. Furthermore, if an Imperial fleet visits the Pacific, Australia will in a comparatively short time offer to furnish all the torpedo craft, scouts, and despatch-boats. The scheme further provides for a vessel suitable for policing the western Pacific Islands and for assisting the High Commissioner, and contemplates the efficient defence, with guns and forts of the latest patterns, of all ports useful for naval bases, thus making Australia a great self-defended naval base for the Empire in the Pacific.[5]

At last Australia had reached the stage of formulating for herself a definite scheme, related to Imperial as well as to Australian needs by a definite naval policy.

In submitting his views to the Imperial Government Fisher made a very important offer for the automatic amalgamation of the local and Imperial forces in any emergency. It deserves reproduction in full:—

In time of war or emergency, or upon a declaration by the senior naval officer representing the British Government that a condition of emergency exists, all the vessels of the Naval Force of the Commonwealth shall be placed by the Commonwealth Government under the orders of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty. The method by which the vessels shall come under the orders of the senior naval officer would be by furnishing each commander of an Australian vessel with sealed orders, and instructions to the effect that, upon the declaration to him by the senior naval officer representing the British Government that a state of war or emergency exists, such sealed orders shall thereupon be opened; and in pursuance of their provisions he shall thereupon immediately place himself under the orders of the senior naval officer representing the British Government.

In spite of the complexity of the phrasing, this method had the merit of great simplicity.

[5] *The Times*, 31 March, 1909.

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Before this policy was made public, however, events in Great Britain itself had introduced new complications. Stirred by grave warnings from the Foreign Secretary (Sir E. Grey) and the First Lord of the Admiralty (R. McKenna), a large section of the British press and public was in the early months of 1909 demanding that the Imperial Navy should be considerably increased. This naturally produced a crop of suggestions that the whole expense of naval defence should not be borne by Britain, and that the colonies ought to share it in one way or another. Towards the end of March the Prime Minister of New Zealand offered the Admiralty the cost of a battleship; a section of the Australian press demanded that the Commonwealth should do likewise; when it was found that Fisher preferred his own form of help, the Premiers of New South Wales and Victoria were goaded into offering the cost of a battleship between them, provided that the Commonwealth did not make such an offer. Deakin, for his part, tried to combine the two programmes: Fisher's proposals, he said,

> are well-proportioned, but their fatal defect is the lack of funds for carrying them out. Nevertheless Australia will be disgraced if she leaves her protection any longer to Great Britain. . . . The opponents of a local squadron scheme are a discredit to Australia. The ultimate goal is an Imperial Navy contributed by all the self-governing States of the Empire, and controlled politically by an Imperial Council. In the present emergency, besides providing efficient local defence, Australia's duty is to stand side by side with New Zealand and contribute a *Dreadnought.*

Once more public opinion was confusedly excited; the gift of a *Dreadnought,* of two *Dreadnoughts,* the Fisher proposals, an increase in the existing subsidy—all these plans had their advocates, and accusations of disloyalty and of bad Australianism were bandied to and fro. The one thing certain was that all Australia was anxious to help the Empire somehow; the only dispute was about methods. At this juncture the Imperial Government wisely called a conference of representatives from the Dominions to discuss the whole question of Imperial defence, with special reference to the Fisher proposals, the New Zealand offer, and a Canadian suggestion for a Canadian local squadron. The conference was set down for July; at the end of May Fisher's Ministry was dismissed

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from office, and the Australian representative of a Deakin-Cook coalition (Colonel Foxton) carried to London with him a new offer, to wit, "an Australian *Dreadnought,* or such addition to its naval strength as may be determined after consultation with the conference in London."

IV

To this conference the Admiralty presented a memorandum which for the first time admitted the existence and the importance of colonial opinion. If the problem to be solved, it said, were merely one of naval strategy, "the greatest output of strength for a given expenditure is obtained by the maintenance of a single navy with the concomitant unity of training and unity of command." But "other considerations than those of strategy alone must be taken into account." The Dominions were at different stages of growth; their geographical positions subjected them to various sorts of strains (a delightfully diplomatic phrase); their history had given rise to individual national sentiment. In short, their defence policies must be allowed to vary in pattern, so long as certain general principles were adhered to.

In later discussions the Admiralty developed a second new idea. While not explicitly disavowing the old formula that "the seas are one, and the Fleet should be one," it proposed the creation of an "Eastern" or "Pacific" Fleet of the Empire, to which Britain, Australia, New Zealand, and possibly Canada should contribute "units." These units were the centre of the new scheme. "A Dominion Government," said the memorandum above mentioned, "desirous of creating a navy should aim at forming a distinct Fleet unit; and the smallest unit is one which, while manageable in time of peace, is capable of being used in its component parts in time of war. . . . The Fleet unit should consist at least of the following:—

1 armoured cruiser (*Indomitable* class),
3 unarmoured cruisers (*Bristol* class),
6 destroyers,
3 submarines,

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with the necessary auxiliaries, such as dépôt and store ships, &c., which are not here specified." If Australia should agree to provide its unit (as it did without demur), the Pacific Fleet would consist of

the Australian unit;

the East Indies unit, provided by the Imperial authorities; and

the China unit, similarly provided, but with New Zealand's gift battle-cruiser as its flagship.

A Canadian unit was suggested "on naval strategical considerations" to complete the fleet; but after discussion with the Canadian representatives it was recognised that Canada's double seaboard was an obstacle. No Canadian Government could have persuaded its Parliament to spend four millions or more on a squadron intended for use only in the Pacific. The Admiralty therefore suggested that two *Bristol*-type cruisers might be procured and stationed in the Pacific, allotting to the Atlantic seaboard a destroyer flotilla and such other cruisers as Canada might care to furnish. In the end, however, party quarrels in the local Parliament isolated Canada from the other Dominions, and her co-operation in the Pacific fleet became impossible.

In settling details, great stress was laid on three points:—

A. Vessels of the Australian unit were to be manned as far as possible by Australian officers and seamen, the numbers required to make up the full complement immediately being lent from the Royal Navy.

B. While in time of peace the unit would be under the exclusive control of the Commonwealth Government, its regulations must resemble the King's Regulations, and the standard of training, discipline, and general efficiency, in ships and officers and men, must be maintained on an equality with that of the Royal Navy. As interchange of officers and men between the two services was in contemplation, this provision was obviously of the first importance.

C. The units of the Pacific fleet must train together as well as independently.

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While it was "recognised," to quote the Admiralty memorandum, "by the colonial governments that in time of war the local naval forces should come under the general directions of the Admiralty," no specific method of transferring control was arranged. Deakin found constitutional objections to the method proposed by the Fisher Ministry,[6] and was merely able to assure the Imperial authorities that he had no doubt the transfer would be made whenever war broke out.

This solution of the local defence problem was immediately and widely approved in Australia. All the factions found some consolation in it. The inclusion of a battle-cruiser satisfied one set of opinions, the retention of the squadron in Australian waters another; even the most recalcitrant were bound to accept a scheme fathered by the Admiralty itself. From that time onwards the naval defence scheme ceased to be the plaything of parties, and took its place in the Australian creed.

Work on the new squadron proceeded smoothly. Two of the destroyers already ordered by the Fisher Ministry were built in England and sent out; the third was also built there, but was taken to pieces again, sent out, and reassembled in the Australian dockyard at Cockatoo Island; the experience gained thereby enabled Australian workmen to build three more. The battle-cruiser was necessarily built in a British yard, as were the first two light cruisers and the submarines; but later two light cruisers were built at Cockatoo. This construction took, of course, several years to complete. The interval was fully occupied in organising the local administration of the new squadron, filling in details of the 1909 agreement, and settling the position of the bases, &c., on the Australian coast without which no squadron could work or even live there. In this period two documents sum up the work of special importance—the *Recommendations* of Admiral Sir R. Henderson, and the *Memoranda on Naval Defence* attached to the report of the Imperial Conference of 1911. Although the *Recommendations* are first in order of time, the *Memoranda* took more immediate effect, and should be first dealt with.

The Deakin Ministry, which had concluded the 1909 agreement, was defeated at the elections of 1910 and succeeded by

[6] *See p. xxviii.*

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a Labour Ministry under Fisher. But this made no difference, except in minor points, to the agreement and the policy. Fisher decided that certain of the vessels should be built in Australia; that the whole cost of building the squadron should be defrayed from revenue, not from loans; and that the Commonwealth should refuse Britain's generous offer to contribute for some years £250,000 annually towards the expenses. He also decided that advice on the location of bases and training-schools for personnel, and the character of the latter, should be obtained from England; and in consequence Sir Reginald Henderson was invited to visit the Commonwealth and give an opinion on those subjects as well as on any other naval matters he might care to consider. Early in 1911 the Prime Minister and two colleagues—one the Minister for Defence—left for London to attend the Imperial Conference; by the end of July they had rounded off the corners of the 1909 agreement, and settled definitely the status and standards of the future Australian Navy.

The chief points in this settlement were as follows:—

(i) The naval services and forces of Australia are exclusively controlled by the Australian Government, so long as they are in Australian waters. In foreign ports Australian warships take instructions from the British Government, the Australian Government being informed of such instructions.

(ii) Training and discipline will be generally uniform with that of the Royal Navy, and officers and men will be interchangeable.

(iii) Australian warships fly the white ensign at the stern and the Australian ensign at the jackstaff. (This gave the Australian vessels status as part of the British Navy; otherwise no foreign Power could have been compelled to recognise them as legitimate warships at all.)

(iv) Seniority is determined by the date of commission, whether the officer concerned is in the Royal Navy or the Royal Australian Navy; and service in either navy counts equally in all respects for promotion, pay, retirement, &c.

(v) When in war time Australian ships are put at the disposal of the Imperial Government, they automatically become an integral part of the Royal Navy, and remain under Admiralty control as long as the war may last.

(vi) The Australian Station includes waters between 95° E. and 160° E., as far south as the Antarctic Circle; but the northern boundary is drawn so as to exclude the Cocos group and all Dutch islands, while including the whole coast of British Papua; and the eastern boundary is extended to include Norfolk Island.[1] Thus it touches no shores except those of Australia itself and its direct dependencies.

[1] These boundaries were greatly altered during the war: *see pp. 121-2.*

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About the same time the building programme was altered so as to make the cruisers rather better and bigger, and the submarines very much better and bigger, than those originally proposed.

V

The *Recommendations* of Admiral Sir R. Henderson, previously mentioned, were dated "1st March, 1911," and were therefore in the possession of the Prime Minister when he went to the Imperial Conference. Neither the conference decisions, however, nor the subsequent developments of Australian naval policy were much, if at all, affected by the *Recommendations,* so that their separate consideration does not break the thread of the main narrative. The subjects originally submitted to Admiral Henderson were—

(i) the positions of the central and secondary naval bases, and the works necessary to make them most serviceable;

(ii) the location and character of the training-schools for officers and men;

(iii) "any other naval matters upon which you may care to express an opinion."

During his visit he was given to understand that his views on "all the measures to be taken, both forthwith and in the future, in the formation of the Fleet" would be welcomed. Accordingly, he devoted the bulk of his *Recommendations* to an ambitious and far-reaching scheme of naval development extending over twenty-two years, and relegated the discussion of naval bases almost entirely to an appendix. The results were unfortunate.

Seeking for a basis on which to determine the strength of the future Australian Navy, Admiral Henderson made various calculations in which the population and oversea trade of the Commonwealth were compared with those of the United Kingdom, and proceeded to assume

> that Australia desires to possess, as early as practicable, a fleet whose annual cost approximates to this proportion, increasing gradually as the population and wealth of the Commonwealth grow.

On this basis he planned for a fleet of fifty-two ships, a personnel of nearly 15,000 men, and an organisation by divisions, squadrons, and flotillas which would require at least

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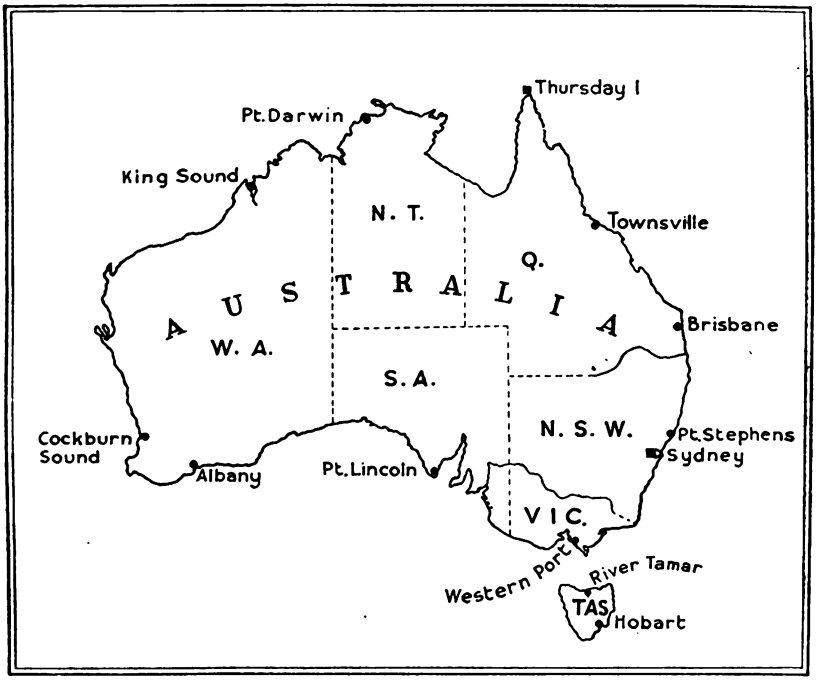
six principal bases and seven sub-bases. This fleet and its appurtenances were to be built up gradually during four "eras," the first of seven years (1911–18), the others of five years each. At the end of the first "era" the fleet would



THE HENDERSON BASES.

List of bases in geographical order south-about from Cape York:—

Thursday Island, (2), (3).
Townsville, (4).
Brisbane, (3), (6).
Port Stephens, (5).
Port Jackson, (1).
Hobart, (4), (6).
Beauty Point, River Tamar, (4), (6).
Western Port, (3), (5).
Port Lincoln, (4), (5).
Albany, (4), (6).
Cockburn Sound, (1), (3). (5).
Cone Bay, King Sound, (4), (6).
Port Darwin, (2), (4), (6).

The numbers indicate—(1) Fleet primary base; (2) Fleet secondary base; (3) Destroyer base; (4) Destroyer sub-base; (5) Submarine base; (6) Submarine sub-base.

consist of twenty-three ships, and the personnel would number 4,384. He dealt also very fully with questions of administration, pay, and other conditions of service, recruiting, intelligence, and naval reserves, as well as with the bases which

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were the original object of his visit. These recommendations were in due course approved in general terms and—in details needing immediate attention, such as the establishment of a Naval Board—were followed; but the recommendations dealing with shipbuilding and the construction of bases received much less attention. Indeed, the Admiral's scheme of "works to be completed by the time the Fleet unit arrives in Australia"[8] was far ahead of anything done by that time, or for that matter, by today.

Meanwhile events had occurred that seemed to imperil the whole local-navy scheme. In those days Germany was the obvious and imminent enemy, and the Admiralty's main object was to maintain a genuine and substantial superiority over the German naval forces. This aspect of Imperial naval policy had been more or less neglected in 1909; even in 1911, when the Agadir incident revived its importance, the Dominion Prime Ministers had not been specially impressed—as they certainly should have been—with the knowledge that all other considerations must give way to that of safeguarding the seas against Germany. Consequently, when a year or two later the Australian Government discovered that what it had looked on as an agreement with the Imperial Government was not being fulfilled—that the China and East Indies units had not been constituted, and the *New Zealand*, which was to have been the China unit's flagship, was being retained for European purposes—friction became inevitable. To-day the causes of the misunderstanding are clear; what the Dominions considered an agreement, equally binding with those of 1887 and 1902 in their day, the Admiralty and the Imperial Government regarded merely as a temporary indication of future policy, so far as policy could be foreshadowed some years ahead. Thus the Admiralty felt quite free to alter its policy to fit new situations without notice to anyone else; the Australian Government, on the other hand, believed that a definite bargain had been made, and that none of the partners could reasonably alter the terms of it without notice to the other partners.

What happened was this. In 1912 Germany completely metamorphosed the European naval situation by a new Navy

[8] *Recommendations, pp. 58-9.*

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Law which must considerably increase her naval strength within a very short period. The Admiralty was compelled, whether it liked it or not, to respond by keeping a much larger number of ships in full commission, and by concentrating all available big ships in the North Sea. Thus the provision of a battle-cruiser as flagship of the East Indies unit was cancelled; the China unit's flagship-to-be, the *New Zealand*, was (with New Zealand's consent) requisitioned for European work, and the creation of any new Dominion units (*e.g.*, by Canada) was rendered impossible because England could not spare crews to man them at the outset. No definite attempt was made to detain the *Australia* in British waters, or to interfere with the growth of the Australian unit, though hints were thrown out that big ships were not needed in the Pacific, and that really effective help from the Dominions could only take the shape of a "flying squadron" of Dominion ships based on Gibraltar.

It can easily be understood that these drastic alterations of the 1909 scheme—unexplained by any despatches, either from the Admiralty or from the Colonial Office, giving the necessary information about the new European situation—produced serious misgivings throughout the Commonwealth.[9] From the Australian standpoint the position was that an agreement had been broken without notice or explanation; that her efforts to share in Imperial defence had been nullified; and that she was left in isolation at the world's end with a solitary unit of naval strength, which could not be properly trained in the absence of the other units. It is unnecessary to consider in detail the recriminations that followed, except so far as to point out that no responsible Australian questioned the Admiralty's superior knowledge of European needs; the Australian points were (*a*) that the British authorities should have kept the Commonwealth Government better informed; (*b*) that some weight should still have been attached to the non-strategical considerations mentioned in the Admiralty Memorandum of 1909.

The only solution in 1914, as in 1909, seemed to be the calling of another conference. For this, however, no early

[9] Australians did not, of course, wish that information of this sort should be made public. But they did want to be sure that their Government had the information; and Ministers repeatedly complained that they were kept in complete ignorance of the Admiralty's reasons for its new policy.

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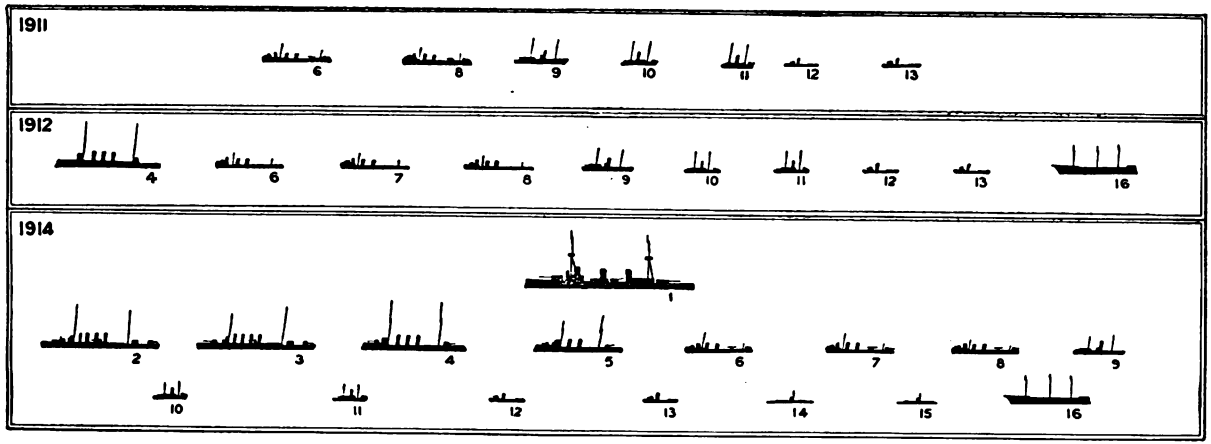
Diagram No. 1



SILHOUETTES SHOWING STRENGTH OF AUSTRALIAN NAVY, 1911, 1912, 1914.

(1) *Australia,* (2) *Melbourne,* (3) *Sydney,* (4) *Encounter,* (5) *Pioneer,* (6) *Parramatta,* (7) *Warrego,* (8) *Yarra,* (9) *Protector,* (10) *Gayundah,* (11) *Paluma,* (12) *Countess of Hopetoun,* (13) *Childers,* (14) Submarine *AE 1,* (15) Submarine *AE 2,* (16) *Tingira.*

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date was suitable. Canada was in the throes of a bitter party struggle over Mr. Borden's naval proposals; South Africa was troubled with strikes, and with unrest among the imported Indian coolies; Britain was disturbed by local quarrels over Ireland, over Welsh Disestablishment, over the Insurance Act. All that Australians, in office or out of office, could do was to go steadily on with the scheme to which they were pledged, and to formulate as clearly as possible the basis on which they were ready to share in any Imperial defence scheme. The views of thoughtful and representative Australians regarding the Pacific situation in 1914 were embodied in the following formula:—

1. There should be ships in the Pacific Ocean enough, and large enough, to cope with any hostile fleet.
2. Those ships should constitute one fleet, and be worked on a common plan.
3. That fleet should be based, as far as concerns construction, repairs, naval bases, &c., on the British Dominions in the Pacific.
4. The ships should be contributed by the various members of the Empire who are interested in the control of the Pacific, and manned as far as possible from their citizens.
5. The fleet should be controlled by an authority which, while not divorced in any way from the British naval authorities, would be in direct touch with the Governments of the Dominions, and would carry out a policy agreed to by all.

VI

At the outbreak of war the position in Australia was as follows. The unit was practically complete except for three destroyers (the *Brisbane* was still in building, but the *Encounter* had taken her place for the time being). The main details of naval administration were settled; the Naval Board was at work, fleet-building had begun, the naval college and the training-ship *Tingira* were in operation, the New South Wales building-yard at Cockatoo Island had been taken over by the Commonwealth, and a certain amount of work had been done on the proposed naval bases at Fremantle and Western Port. The squadron had been officially welcomed to Australia on its entrance to Port Jackson in October, 1913, and had since been visiting other Australian ports and carrying out the necessary forms of training. Of the 3,800 officers and men, 850 had been lent by

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the Royal Navy, and 2,950 were permanent members of the Australian service. A proportion of the latter had entered from the British navy, but at Jervis Bay 59 cadet-midshipmen were now being trained for commissioned rank;[10] and besides artificers, stokers, and other Australian personnel recruited from the shore, 295 boys from the *Tingira* were serving in the fleet.[11] Even the submarines, which required specially trained personnel, were manned by half-Australian crews, a number of specially picked young seamen and stokers having been sent to England for training and to assist in bringing out the submarines. On the Australian coast several wireless stations had lately been established by the Government, but, as will be seen,[12] none of really high power or thoroughly adequate for naval requirements.

Questions of naval policy were for the time in abeyance. Federal elections of an unprecedented kind—following on a "double dissolution"—were due in September, and in them and local problems connected with them both politicians and the public were immersed. The Pacific sphere of diplomacy was disturbed; with disturbances in the European sphere Australians were not much concerned, since action in that direction lay outside their ambit. Their share of Imperial responsibility was to build up their citizen army and foster the efficiency of their new squadron, and that business was being handled by the proper departmental officials. At the same time there was still, among some of those Australians who were most interested, an undercurrent of sentiment against the British authorities—a resentful feeling that the cherished unit scheme had been in some way belittled, and a determination to convince the Admiralty sooner or later that the Australian ships were really of some use, in spite of the imperfect training that their isolation involved. In some way the fleet already typified Australia's Imperial effort. The military forces had grown and developed under happy auspices, with constant help and approval from Britain;

[10] Like the cadets for the Commonwealth's military staff, those at the Royal Australian Naval College are chosen from the whole population of the Commonwealth, and, upon entry, are maintained at Government expense.

[11] The strength at which the naval personnel was maintained during the several years of the war, and the proportion lent by the Royal Navy, are shown in *Appendix No. 5.*

[12] *In chapter XIV.*

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but the Fleet was the Commonwealth's own creation, conceived in Australian minds (albeit at Admiral Tryon's suggestion), born after long struggles against British reluctance, never—except, perhaps, in the halcyon days of 1909-11—thoroughly approved of by high British authorities. Moreover, it was unique; no other Dominion had undertaken such a responsibility; it was a daring experiment, and the prestige of Australia was bound up with its success. In July of that fateful year hardly any non-official Australians—and very few officials—dreamt that war was coming; but very many indeed were eager to ensure that, if ever war did come, the Australian Navy should take a worthy and may be a splendid part in it.

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CHAPTER I

THE OUTBREAK OF WAR

AT the outbreak of war the Australian Squadron consisted of the following vessels:—

Battle-cruiser *Australia*	..	19,200 tons ..	44,000 h.p.
Light cruisers—			
Melbourne, *Sydney*, *Brisbane* (building)	..	5,400 tons ..	22,000 h.p.
Destroyers—			
Parramatta, *Yarra*, *Warrego*	..	700 tons ..	12,000 h.p.
Submarines—			
AE 1, *AE 2*	..	800 tons ..	1,750 h.p.

Besides these ships the Commonwealth owned or controlled the light cruiser *Encounter,* lent by the Admiralty until the *Brisbane* should be completed; the small cruiser *Pioneer,* a gift from the Admiralty; the gunboats *Protector* and *Gayundah;* and the torpedo-boats *Childers* and *Countess of Hopetoun,* remanets from the old colonial flotillas, but still considered fit for minor coastal services. In building, besides the *Brisbane,* were three more destroyers, a parent ship for submarines, and an oil-tanker; but the last two, being built in Britain, were used by the Admiralty in European waters during the war, and did not come under the Australian authorities until after peace was made.

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The governing authority—the Australian Naval Board—consisted of—

Chairman, the Minister for Defence (Senator E. D. Millen).

1st Naval Member, Rear-Admiral Sir William Creswell, K.C.M.G., R.A.N.

2nd Naval Member, Captain A. Gordon Smith, R.N.[1]

3rd Naval Member, Engineer-Captain W. Clarkson,[2] C.M.G., R.A.N.

There was at the time no Finance Member. The squadron was under the command of Rear-Admiral Sir George E. Patey.[3]

Towards the end of July, 1914, both the squadron and the governing authority were enjoying a comparatively restful stage of existence. The Minister was in Sydney, engaged in an election campaign, for the Federal elections were to take place on the 5th of September. The 1st Naval Member was in Brisbane on leave. The squadron was on its annual winter cruise off the coast of Queensland; one destroyer, the *Gayundah,* and the submarines were in Port Jackson, and the *Pioneer* in Port Phillip. Everything was normal; a more placid situation could scarcely be conceived.

Then out of a clear sky on the 27th of July there fell on Australia news of this kind:—

London, July 26th.

A great crisis has developed in Europe, owing to the action of Austria in delivering an ultimatum to Serbia and demanding a reply by 6 p.m. yesterday. . . . Early in the evening it was definitely announced that the ultimatum had been rejected. . . . The best-informed circles at Buda-Pest consider that war is inevitable. . . . The Austro-Servian differences are the first symptom of a gigantic Slav-Teutonic struggle.

Later in the day news came through that the British Admiralty had countermanded the dispersal of the First Fleet (which had been assembled in the Solent for manœuvres), and retained the vessels of the Second Fleet at home ports. That is to

[1] Vice-Admiral A. Gordon Smith, C.M.G.; R.N. Second Naval Member of Aust. Naval Board, 1914/17; b. Camborne, Cornwall, Eng., 30 March, 1873.

[2] Engineer Vice-Admiral Sir William Clarkson, K.B.E., C.M.G.; R.A.N. Third Naval Member of Aust. Naval Board, 1911/22; of Melbourne; b. Whitby, Yorks., Eng., 26 March, 1859. Died 21 Jan., 1934.

[3] Admiral Sir George E. Patey, K.C.M.G., K.C.V.O.; R.N. C.-in-C. Royal Australian Fleet, 1913/15; C.-in-C. North America and West Indies Station, 1915/16; b. Montpellier House, near Plymouth, Eng., 24 Feb., 1859.

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say, not only was war practically certain in eastern Europe, but the possibility of its extension westwards was great enough to justify British naval precautions.

Now it had long since been arranged between the Admiralty and the Naval Board that, whenever relations with any foreign Power were strained, the Australian warships should be quietly moved towards the stations which would be theirs in war. The Admiralty undertook to send in advance a warning that this should be done. On the 28th no such warning had yet been received; but the messages cabled from London to the Australian press were in themselves a warning, and the two members of the Board present in Melbourne decided to recommend that certain precautions should be taken. In the absence of definite news from the Admiralty it was not thought wise to stop leave in the squadron, or to issue to commanding officers any serious warning; but they suggested that Admiral Patey should be asked what he thought should be done in case of war breaking out, and that steps should be taken to initiate a system of censorship over messages sent by wireless. The Minister, who was still in Sydney, approved these proposals on the 29th, but was obviously swayed—as the Board had been—by the non-receipt of any official warning from the Imperial Government.

Meanwhile Admiral Patey himself had become anxious, and on the 29th suggested that his ships should be brought down to Sydney to take in coal and stores; but the Minister, still influenced by the absence of official news, would only authorise the despatch southwards of one light cruiser, "ostensibly to dock or give leave," and the purchase of some extra supplies of coal. On the 30th, however, all hesitation came to an end. On that day Admiral Patey received a message from the senior naval officer stationed in New Zealand, and another from the admiral commanding on the China station; while Garden Island intercepted the China message and a similar one from the admiral commanding on the East Indies station. All the messages announced that the Admiralty had sent out the expected warning, and the New Zealand message added that all preparations for an outbreak of war were already being made there.

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Admiral Patey had received the first message at 5 p.m., and transmitted it to Melbourne at once. At 6 o'clock the Board asked permission to call the squadron south; at 9 the Minister assented, and by 10.30 that evening the squadron was under weigh. The *Australia* and *Encounter* came straight to Sydney; the *Melbourne* followed them, after transferring oil and stores to the two destroyers. The *Sydney* did her coaling at Townsville, where the destroyers joined her on the 3rd of August. The submarines, which were refitting after their voyage from England, had the work so speeded up that the second was ready ten days before her time. In Melbourne a "war organisation" was established at the Navy Office on the 31st, including a war staff under Commander Thring[4] for handling all matters connected with naval operations; supplies of all kinds were collected (as will be narrated in a later chapter), and the precautions proper to an impending state of war were taken as far as suited the situation.

On the 31st, also, the Board received from the Secretary for Defence a memorandum informing them that a warning had been received from the Admiralty. This warning had in fact been issued by the Admiralty on the 29th, simultaneously with those sent to the East Indies, China, and New Zealand; but it had gone a much longer journey. In the negotiation of details of administration between the Imperial and the Australian authorities a question had long before arisen as to methods of communication between the Admiralty and the Naval Board. The Admiralty had naturally fought hard for direct communication, pointing out that the use of circuitous channels led to the "possibility of delays and misunderstandings, and above all the leakage of information of the most secret character." But the Commonwealth Government insisted that, so long at any rate as the Australian Navy remained under Commonwealth control, all Admiralty communications should be transmitted through the usual channels.

II

In every nation the defence authorities are bound to consider beforehand the possibility of war, and to make up their

[4] Capt. W. H. C. S. Thring, C.B.E.; R.A.N..; of Wiltshire, Eng.; b. Bradford-on-Avon, Wilts., Eng., 30 May, 1873.

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minds exactly what must be done not only when war comes, but also when it seems imminent. The action that may be necessary varies, of course, according to the probable enemy.

The probable enemy in this case was Germany; and the usual position of Germany's naval forces in the Pacific was that a couple of light cruisers at most were stationed in the neighbourhood of the German Solomons, and the rest of her ships (which included two large cruisers) in the China Sea. Accordingly it had been arranged with the Admiralty that, in case of imminent war with Germany, the Australian light cruisers would take up the defence of Australian trade, and two of them would hunt down the German light cruisers, while the third patrolled off Western Australia. The *Australia,* being too big and valuable a ship to use on this kind of work, would join the China Squadron, and operate with British warships of similar size in the eastern seas. But, should it be suspected that armoured enemy ships were anywhere near Australia, then the *Australia's* first duty would be to hunt them down. When the *Australia* was sent off to join the China Squadron, Admiral Patey would naturally leave her and hoist his flag as admiral of the Australian Squadron in the *Encounter.*

Normally, therefore, as soon as the squadron was ready for action, the *Australia* would have proceeded to Albany to await orders from the admiral at Hong Kong, the *Melbourne* would have cruised off Fremantle, and Admiral Patey with the *Encounter* and *Sydney* would have gone northwards to search the German islands for enemy ships. On the 30th of July, in answer to a request from the Federal Government for instructions, the Admiralty actually telegraphed a request that this should be done, and directions were given accordingly. But it so happened that in the first days of August Australian wireless stations had begun to listen for German messages, and had intercepted several from the big German cruisers. This fact showed that these vessels were not in the China Sea as expected, but somewhere within range of Australian wireless—*i.e.,* not more than 1,500 miles away (at the moment it was supposed that they were much nearer, probably within 1,000 miles, and possibly in the Bismarck Archipelago). The

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Admiralty was therefore asked—and at once agreed—to let the *Australia* search the German islands before going to Albany.

Meanwhile events were moving fast. On the 2nd of August an "examination service" was put into force at all defended ports on the Australian coast; that is, all vessels entering or leaving those ports were stopped by officials in naval employ and made to prove their *bona fides* and harmless character. On the 3rd, censorship was enforced on all messages sent by cable or wireless from Australia. On the 4th came Admiralty orders to detain all German colliers. Even up to the last the imminence of war was discounted in the messages from London; the request to send the *Australia* to Albany was "purely precautionary," and as late as the 3rd of August the Board was told to "understand clearly that this is not a war telegram." But at 11 a.m. on the 5th definite news came:

War has broken out between Great Britain and Germany.

Within a couple of hours the whole machinery of active defence was in full working order. All the warships (except the *Encounter,* the *Pioneer,* and the two submarines) were already at sea on their way to their war stations. The examination service was stiffened, and entrance to or exit from defended ports confined to vessels with an official permit. Intelligence centres and signal stations were established and at work all round the coast. The naval forces of the Commonwealth, recently organised as they were, and plunged without experience into a great war, sprang to action as readily and efficiently as the most exacting Admiralty could have desired.

Before passing on to narrate actual operations, it is convenient here to explain one more formality that regulated the naval situation in Australia for the rest of the war.

It will be remembered that in 1909 the Fisher Ministry offered the Admiralty a scheme[5] whereby control of the Australian naval forces would pass automatically from the Commonwealth to the Imperial authorities whenever a high Imperial officer should think the emergency grave enough. This offer was withdrawn by Deakin before the Admiralty had had time to consider it; but during the Imperial Conference of 1911 it was settled that in time of war (or earlier, if the

[5] *See p. xxviii.*

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VICE-ADMIRAL SIR GEORGE E. PATEY, COMMANDER OF THE AUSTRALIAN FLEET, 1913–15

Photograph taken at Bermuda, November 1915.

Lent by Paymaster-Lieut. D. Munro, R.A.N.
Aust. War Memorial Collection No. EN385.

To face p. 7.

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Imperial authorities considered it advisable) the Australian ships would be transferred to Admiralty control, and by the *Naval Defence Act* of 1912 power to make the transfer was conferred on the Governor-General in Council. The exact method of transference, details of which were worked out by correspondence during 1912-14, was as follows:—

On the receipt of a pre-arranged cablegram from the Imperial authorities, the Australian Government would place the Naval Board and the naval services of the Commonwealth directly under the control of the Admiralty. The sea-going fleet would then become a squadron of the Imperial Navy, taking orders either direct from London or from the British officer under whom they were placed. The Naval Board would be placed in the position, with regard to the Admiralty, of a naval commander-in-chief at a British port, and would take orders direct from the Admiralty, informing the Commonwealth Government of those orders. Any important orders issued to Australian ships, or orders involving help that the Board could give, would be communicated to the Board by the Admiralty; and other naval officers in high command anywhere would communicate with the Board exactly as they would with fellow-officers of similar rank.

Accordingly the first Admiralty messages mentioned above were in form merely requests to the Australian Government; and the Imperial Government was careful to telegraph its "warm appreciation of your prompt action with regard to the Australian Fleet." On the 3rd of August, however, the Australian Government took a further step, and telegraphed—

In event of war Government prepared place vessels of Australian Navy under control British Admiralty when desired.

A return message thanked them for their readiness to place the naval forces at the Admiralty's disposal; then there was silence. Consequently on the 6th another message went from Melbourne:—

Do you wish previous cable regarding Australian Fleet to be regarded as transfer to Admiralty control?

and on the 8th came the following answer:—

His Majesty's Government understood from your telegram of 31st[6] July that steps were being taken formally to transfer control and if this has not already been done Admiralty would be grateful if the transfer were made now.

On the 10th, therefore, an Order in Council[7] transferred to the King's naval forces, and thus brought under direct Admiralty control, all vessels, officers, and seamen of the

[6] The telegram was sent from Australia on the 30th.
[7] *See Appendix No. 27.*

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Commonwealth naval forces "until the issue of a Proclamation declaring that the aforementioned war no longer exists." The Naval Board and its local machinery, it will be noted, was not explicitly transferred, except in so far as it might come under the heading "officers and seamen." But the understanding previously reached was considered to hold good.

From this time on, therefore, to the end of the war, the Naval Board occupied a rather anomalous position. On the one hand, it was part of the normal machinery of the Commonwealth Government, dependent for money, and for authority to spend it, on Federal ministers and the Federal treasury. On the other hand, its actions and orders were controlled by the British Admiralty, exactly as would be the actions and orders of the admiral commanding, say, at Dover; while the ships for whose upkeep it was responsible to Australia became part of the Imperial Navy, and were in course of time dispersed among British squadrons in various oceans Stated on paper, this dual control obviously afforded unlimited opportunities for friction; and even the pettiest sort of friction might easily have imperilled the whole arrangement.

In practice, however, the amount of friction was extremely small and quite harmless, because in employing the new machinery all parties exercised great discretion. The Admiralty, while using its power on all normal occasions in the normal manner, was careful to give the Federal Government an opportunity of considering exceptional or very important orders before they were put into force. The Federal Government loyally concurred in all such orders, and made no difficulties about providing the means for executing them. The practice of this tactfulness occasionally resulted in delays which would not otherwise have occurred, but which were the price, well worth paying, for satisfactory co-operation between two overlapping authorities. The usefulness of the Australian Navy for Imperial purposes thus depended on a dual control which, stated in black and white, might seem almost unworkable, but which was made perfectly workable by the exercise of personal tact, inspired by a loyal enthusiasm for the greater objects of naval administration.

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III

At 10 a.m. on the 5th of August—the exact moment at which war formally began—the position of the Australian warships was as follows:—

The *Australia*[8] had left Port Jackson at 9.45 p.m. the night before, and was hurrying northwards along the coast to a pre-arranged rendezvous.

The *Melbourne* had left Port Jackson at 11 p.m. and was steaming south-about to take up her patrol off the Western Australian coast.

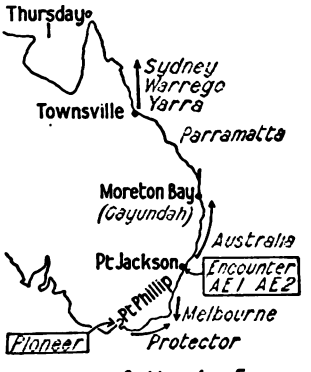
The *Sydney*, *Warrego*, and *Yarra*, which had left Townsville on the 3rd (*Warrego* on the 4th), were nearing Thursday Island.

The *Parramatta*, which had left Port Jackson on the 3rd, was nearing Townsville.

The *Protector* was on her way from Port Phillip to Port Jackson, where she was to become parent-ship to the submarines.

In Port Jackson were the *Encounter* and the two submarines, refitting; the *Encounter* was ready for work at daylight on the 6th, *AE 1* on the 8th, and *AE 2* on the 10th.

The *Pioneer* was acting as guardship in Port Phillip, and the *Gayundah* had left Sydney on the 4th to perform similar service in Moreton Bay.



Position of ships Aug 5

Apart from the guardships, the objective of the squadron was the German squadron[9] in the Pacific. And about that hardly anything was known. The *Gneisenau* had been last heard of at Nagasaki, which she had left on the 23rd of June. It was believed that the *Emden* was at Tsingtao, and the *Geier* somewhere near Singapore on her way east; the *Leipzig* was on the west coast of America, and the *Nürnberg* had been there some time before. Of the *Scharnhorst* nothing at all was known. But when, on the 1st of August, the Australian wireless stations began to listen for German messages, almost at once the *Scharnhorst* was heard talking to Yap and Nauru and trying to reach the *Nürnberg*, while the *Geier* and the little surveying ship *Planet* were also detected. Radio-experts at the time thought they could tell even the distance these messages had travelled, and announced that the

[8] For a photograph of the *Australia* coaling on 4 Aug. *see Vol. XII, plate 2.*
[9] For its composition, &c., *see p. 20.*

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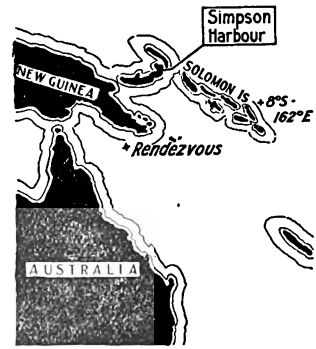
Scharnhorst was "from 800 to 1,000 miles north-east of Port Moresby," *i.e.*, somewhere south of the eastern Carolines. Nearly all the intercepted messages were in an unknown cypher; the only one ever decyphered (intercepted on the 3rd, but not read till the 13th) was a signal from Yap to the *Scharnhorst:* "You must go to the Marianne Islands." For some reason still undiscovered this message was not taken seriously; possibly the fact that it *was* intelligible made the experts distrust it.

On the information made available it was decided to search the Bismarck Archipelago. If the German squadron was intended to attack Australia, its natural course would be to base its operations on some port in those islands, and it was known that Simpson Harbour in New Britain had been prepared, in an elementary way, for coaling big ships. A rendezvous was therefore appointed some way south of New Guinea at which the *Australia, Sydney, Encounter,* and three destroyers should concentrate for an attack on Simpson Harbour. While Admiral Patey was on his way there, a message from the Board informed him that wireless experts had located the German squadron "in lat. 8° S., long. 162° E., course probably south-easterly." (He also heard that three German colliers had hurriedly landed their pilots and left Newcastle.) This guess (for it was no more) did not disturb the admiral in any way; but it did induce the Board to recall the *Melbourne* (with the Admiralty's permission, of course) and send her north to join the squadron, while the *Pioneer* went west on the 6th to take her place off Fremantle.



Neither the *Encounter* nor the *Melbourne* was in time to join up at the rendezvous, but the other vessels met at 10 a.m. on the 9th of August and proceeded to the mouth of St. George's Channel in the Bismarck Archipelago, which

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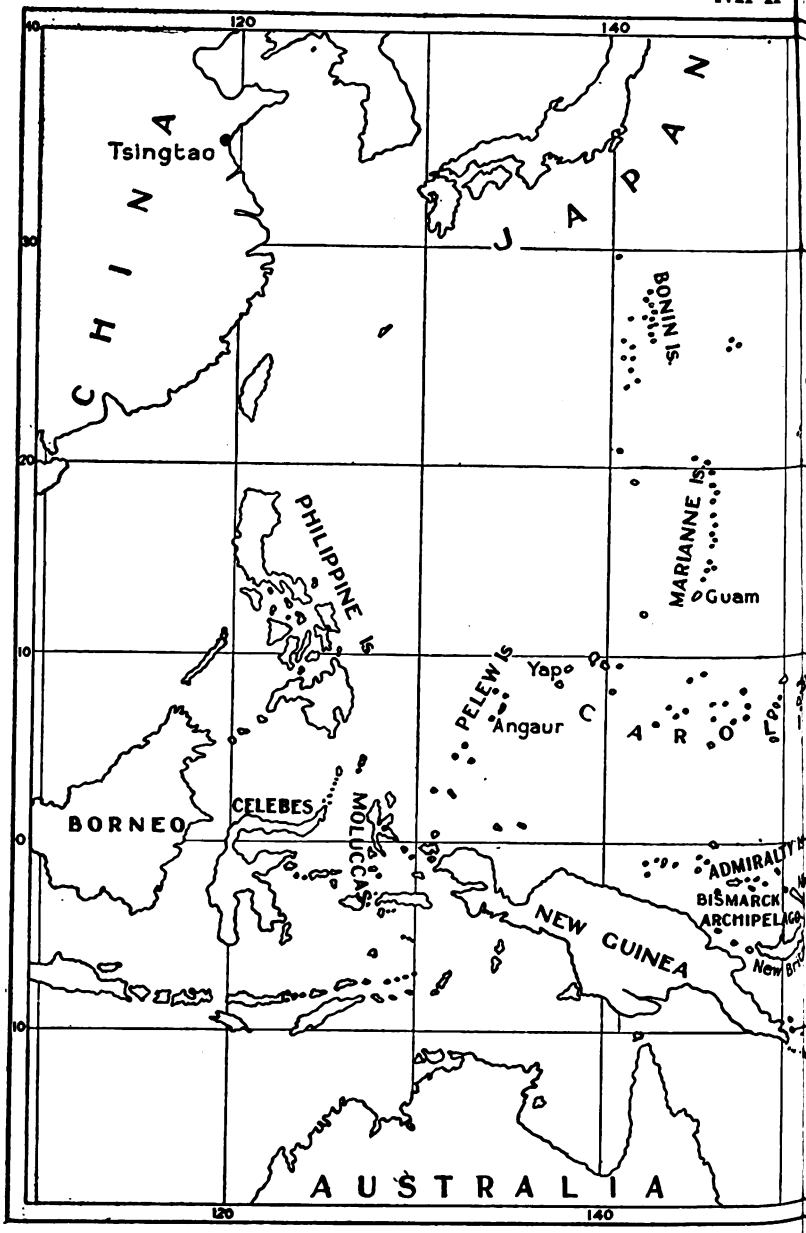

THE WESTERN

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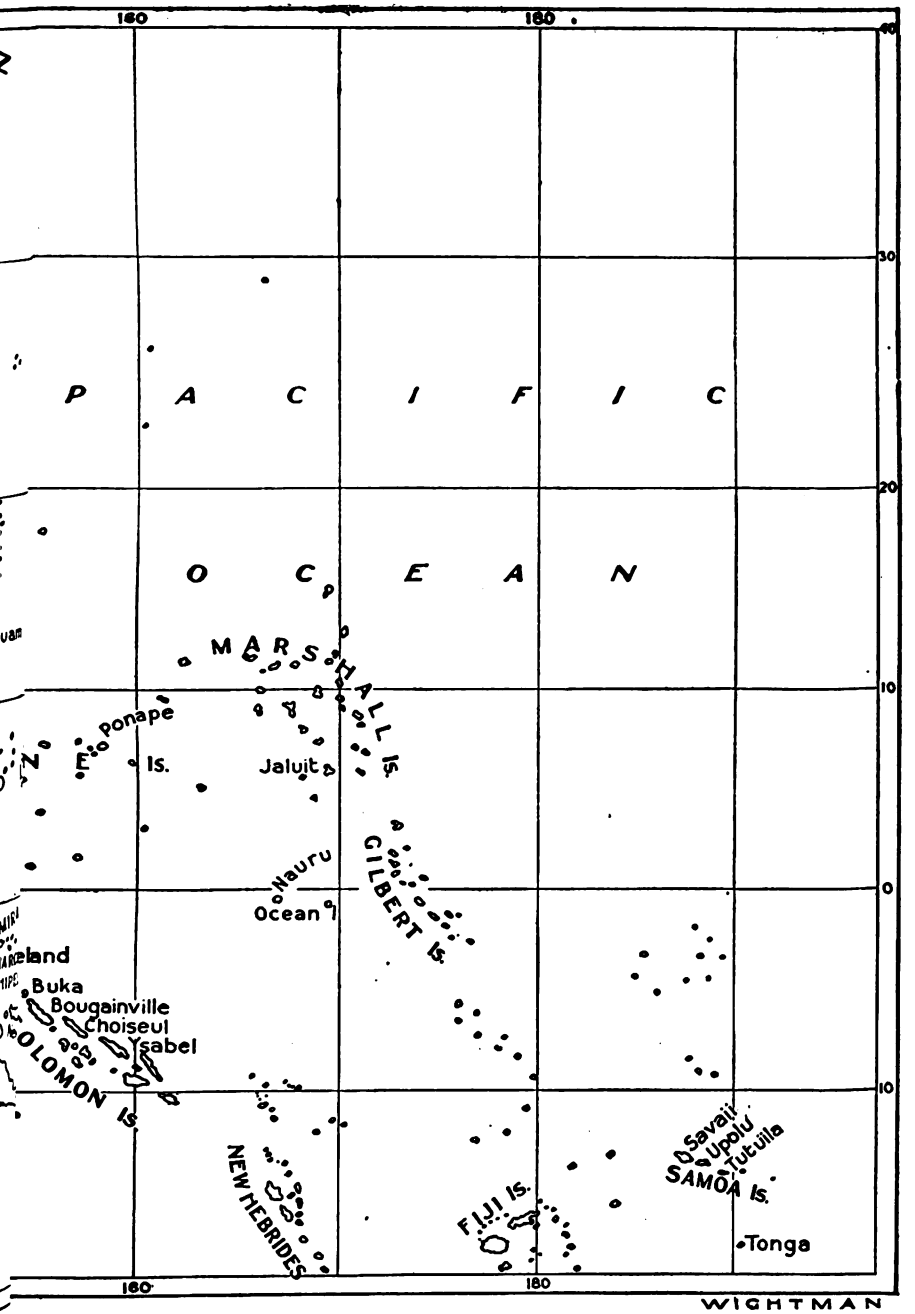

PACIFIC OCEAN

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they reached in the afternoon of the 11th.[10] The essential parts of the operation order which governed the squadron's actions ran as follows:—

All indications pointing to the probability of the German ships *Scharnhorst, Gneisenau,* and *Nürnberg*—and perhaps *Komet* and *Planet*—being in the neighbourhood of Simpsonhafen, New Britain, and to their being found either in that place or in Matupi Harbour, I intend to make an attack on those ports with the object of torpedoing any ships which are there and destroying the wireless station. . . .

(On arrival) *Sydney* will take charge of destroyers . . . and will proceed to Simpsonhafen at 20 knots. Should the enemy's heavy ships be met with under way outside, the destroyers are to attack at once. . . .

Having reached the harbour entrance, *Sydney* will remain there in support; the destroyers will proceed into Simpsonhafen and attack any men-of-war found there, rejoining *Sydney* after delivering their attack. . . . The main objective is the enemy's heavy ships.

Should no men-of-war be found in either harbour, the destroyers are to land a party and destroy the wireless telegraph station reported to be at Rabaul.

In the light of later knowledge this operation may seem to have been simple and without risk. The reader who wishes to understand it, however, should dismiss from his mind all later knowledge and reconstruct the situation as it appeared to those who were in it. To them, and quite reasonably on the information they had, the presence in Simpson Harbour of the big enemy cruisers was all but certain. It was inconceivable that Germany would not use them, and at the same time practically certain that she was not using them in the China Sea. There were many known reasons why she should attack Australia; Simpson Harbour was her best base for such an attack, and her cruisers had had plenty of time to get there before the outbreak of war.

It was therefore in expectation of almost certain battle and with every sense on the strain, that at 9 p.m. the destroyers, which while at Thursday Island had been painted black, slipped into the bay. The *Sydney* waited about three miles off Praed Point. The *Yarra* turned north into Matupi Harbour, an important little trading and coaling harbour just below the thickly-wooded slopes of the Turanguna volcano. The *Warrego* and the *Parramatta* made straight for the western side of Simpson Harbour, and coasted northwards along its low mangrove-lined shores towards

[10] *See Vol. XII, plate 13.*

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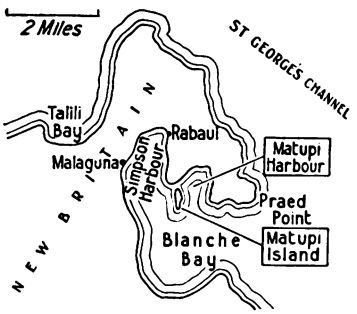

the wharves at Rabaul. The night was exceptionally dark; the glare of a bush fire seen behind the shoulder of the North Daughter gave the illusion that a warship was playing her searchlight on the hills; the brilliant acetylene lights of Rabaul, flashing intermittently behind palm-trees on the eastern shore, closely resembled the lamp-signals that are usually interchanged between ships of a squadron at anchor. It was not until the *Warrego* actually found herself at Rabaul jetty that her commander began to realise the truth. The harbour was empty of warships of any kind. Deeply disappointed, but careful to maintain the secrecy till then preserved, Commander Cumberlege[11] turned to join the *Yarra*—which had been just as unfortunate—and at 10.35 p.m. reported to the *Sydney* that he had drawn blank. The flotilla now proceeded round the northern point of New Britain into Talili Bay, which also was found empty. About this time the German manager of a plantation at Put-put on Rügen Harbour, 18 miles south of Blanche Bay, telephoned through to Rabaul that "several ships are cruising in St. George's Channel and off the coast of southern New Mecklenburg" (*i.e.*, New Ireland). This information—probably the belated result of native reports to the manager—was immediately repeated to the wireless station and signalled from it, so that the destroyers intercepted the message and knew how little of their movements had yet been discovered by the enemy.

The search for warships having proved unsuccessful, the second part of the programme was entered on, and at daylight on the 12th the destroyers returned to Simpson Harbour to locate and destroy the wireless station. About 7 a.m. they appeared off Rabaul, where they were expected, Herbertshöhe having reported more than an hour earlier that a British fleet, consisting of "one battleship, two large cruisers, and one small one, and three torpedo-boats," was in the roadstead. At this first landing enquiries were made of a German clerk and

[11] Rear-Admiral C. L. Cumberlege; R.N.; b. London, 9 June, 1877.

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a policeman (apparently the only people visible) as to the whereabouts of the station and of a Mr. Stephen Whiteman, a British resident of Rabaul who had, in fact, been interned some days before with other British nationals. The examinees could or would tell nothing; scrutiny of the neighbouring country with field-glasses failed to show any wireless mast; the destroyers therefore put off again, and skirted the shores of the bay towards Herbertshöhe, scrutinising every yard of visible country. At 9 a.m., nothing having been discovered by this method, Commander Cumberlege made an official landing at Rabaul jetty with an armed party, and cross-examined the local Bezirksamtmann (district officer). This official (Tölke by name) stated on his honour (*a*) that there was no wireless station within fifty miles of Rabaul, (*b*) that there were no troops of any sort, and (*c*) that no resistance would be offered to a landing in force. The first of these statements was a deliberate lie; the second and third were true as regarded the Rabaul district only. In actual fact an "expeditionary force" had been organised some days before to defend the wireless station at Bitapaka, and the local militia—a distinct force—was in camp at Malaguna on Blanche Bay, where the roads from Herbertshöhe and Talili Bay join before approaching Rabaul.

Meanwhile information obtained elsewhere was not of much more value. The *Australia* stopped a little schooner (the *Talasea*) and examined her owner, but all he knew was that the wireless station was somewhere in the bush. The *Sydney* intercepted a message from the station itself:—

> Six enemy's ships lying near Rabaul; they are supposed to be about to destroy the wireless station or to bombard Rabaul and Herbertshöhe. Dare not send more.

On this Admiral Patey sent off to Rabaul a message addressed to the Governor, and demanding that these signals, being of a hostile nature, should be stopped at once; if they were continued, fire would be opened on the settlements. The answer was a protest from the district officer:—[12]

> To the Admiral of the English Warships now visiting Rabaul and the neighbourhood.
>
> The administration of the town of Rabaul is in the hands of the undersigned, as District Officer.

[12] Original in *Appendix No. 28.*

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With reference to the letter handed to me for delivery to the Governor, I have to state that there is no wireless station in or near Rabaul. I am not in a position to exercise any influence on the management of the wireless station, and in particular I am unable to prevent it from functioning in the future. The threatened bombardment of the undefended town of Rabaul would be contrary to all international law.

I have forwarded the letter to the Governor, and will let you know the answer as soon as it arrives.

Rabaul, August 12, 1914.

The Imperial District Officer,

(Signed) TÖLKE.[13]

The *Parramatta* visited Herbertshöhe and tried to get information from officials and missionaries, but none was forthcoming.

Early in the afternoon the *Warrego* ran back to Rabaul and landed a party to destroy such telegraphic and telephonic communications as could be found. Accordingly the local post-office was wrecked as thoroughly as was possible on short notice. The *Sydney* lay off Herbertshöhe and made another attempt to extract information; German writers allege that the place was threatened with bombardment if the position of the wireless station was not disclosed by 6 p.m. But before that hour Admiral Patey had begun to grow restless. The station was evidently some distance inland, and the search for it might occupy several days; the German squadron (which after all was the Australian Squadron's first objective) was still unlocated; the ships were very short of coal and oil, and an early return to the nearest base was desirable. Therefore about 4.30 p.m. the squadron left St. George's Channel and proceeded towards the coast of Bougainville, the destroyers being almost immediately detached to Rossel Island to fill up with oil. On the 13th the *Australia* and *Sydney* searched the sea passages round Bougainville for German ships, but unsuccessfully. Then they made south to replenish their stores of fuel, the *Australia* at Port Moresby, the light cruiser at Rossel Island.

It will be remembered that neither the *Encounter* nor the *Melbourne* had been able to take part in this first raid in German waters. The *Encounter* had to be left at Sydney to

[13] In this letter, it will be noted, Herr Tölke confined himself to the strict truth about wireless stations.

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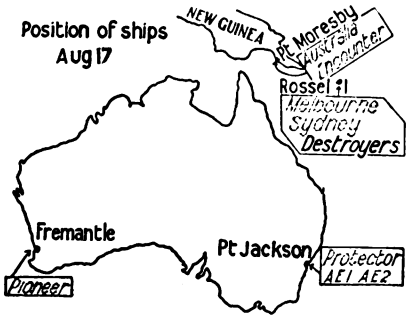
complete repairs; the *Melbourne* had been sent off round the Australian coast towards Fremantle, but had been recalled while in Bass Strait and despatched to join the squadron as soon as possible. The *Encounter,* by working at high pressure, managed to leave Port Jackson on the 6th, and to join the *Australia* on the 12th while still in St. George's Channel; just before joining up she intercepted a British steamer, the *Zambezi,* which had been commandeered by the German administrator at Nauru to carry despatches and material for completing the wireless station at Rabaul. The captured vessel was sent off to Sydney as a prize; the *Encounter* accompanied the destroyers to Rossel Island, and then joined the *Australia* at Port Moresby.[14]

Meanwhile the *Melbourne,* which left Sydney northwards on the 9th, picked up on its way a British collier (the *Alconda*) bound for the Philippines, and took her along to Rossel Island, where supplies of very poor coal were obtained from her by the light cruisers. The destroyers oiled from the *Physa,* a British-India vessel on her way from Batavia to New Zealand with Dutch oil, which had been detained by the Commonwealth authorities at Thursday Island and commandeered for naval use. The reasons for this rather haphazard fashion of obtaining fuel supplies will be explained in a later chapter.



On the 17th of August—which, for reasons shortly to appear, may be taken as the end of the first phase of the Australian naval operations—the position of the warships was as follows:—

At Port Moresby—*Australia* ready, *Encounter* coaling.
At Rossel Island—*Melbourne, Sydney,* and destroyers, complete with coal, but still oiling.
At Sydney—*Protector* and submarines.
At Fremantle—*Pioneer.*

[14] At Port Moresby the *Australia* left a Maxim gun, 25 rifles, and a supply of ammunition to aid the defence of the port.

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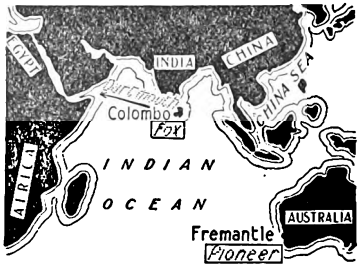
IV

At this point in the narrative it will be convenient to consider first the early operations of British and other Allied warships in the seas that border eastern Asia, and then the German preparations in the same area, and the actual doings of the German squadron during the first weeks of the war.

It has already been mentioned that the Admiralty's War Orders contemplated attaching the *Australia* to the China Squadron, while the two Australian light cruisers—when once their local work was done—were to be attached to the China and the East Indies Squadron respectively. Accordingly, as has already been said, the *Melbourne* was despatched to Fremantle, though she was recalled long before she could get there. But it may be of interest to record what her duties—laid down by the Admiral commanding the East Indies Squadron—would have been. Based on Fremantle, she was to patrol the Indian Ocean towards Colombo, protecting British and Allied vessels and inflicting all possible damage on enemy vessels. The *Fox*, a much older, smaller, and less speedy cruiser, was to do similar patrol work from a base at Colombo.



When the *Melbourne* was recalled, she was replaced by the *Pioneer* (which, by the by, owing to defects in machinery, did not reach Fremantle till the 16th of August). This re-arrangement considerably weakened British control of the Indian Ocean. The cruiser *Dartmouth*, a ship of practically the same strength as the Australian cruisers, had to be employed in convoying Indian troopships to Egypt, and the defence of trade-routes east and south of Colombo was left to two small and old vessels of 19-20 knots nominal speed. Thus it happened that, when the *Emden* (a modern vessel of 24½ knots) reached those trade-routes, she was faster than any warship within the area of her depredations, until the *Yarmouth* (a sister ship to the *Dartmouth*) could be detached from the China Squadron to chase her.

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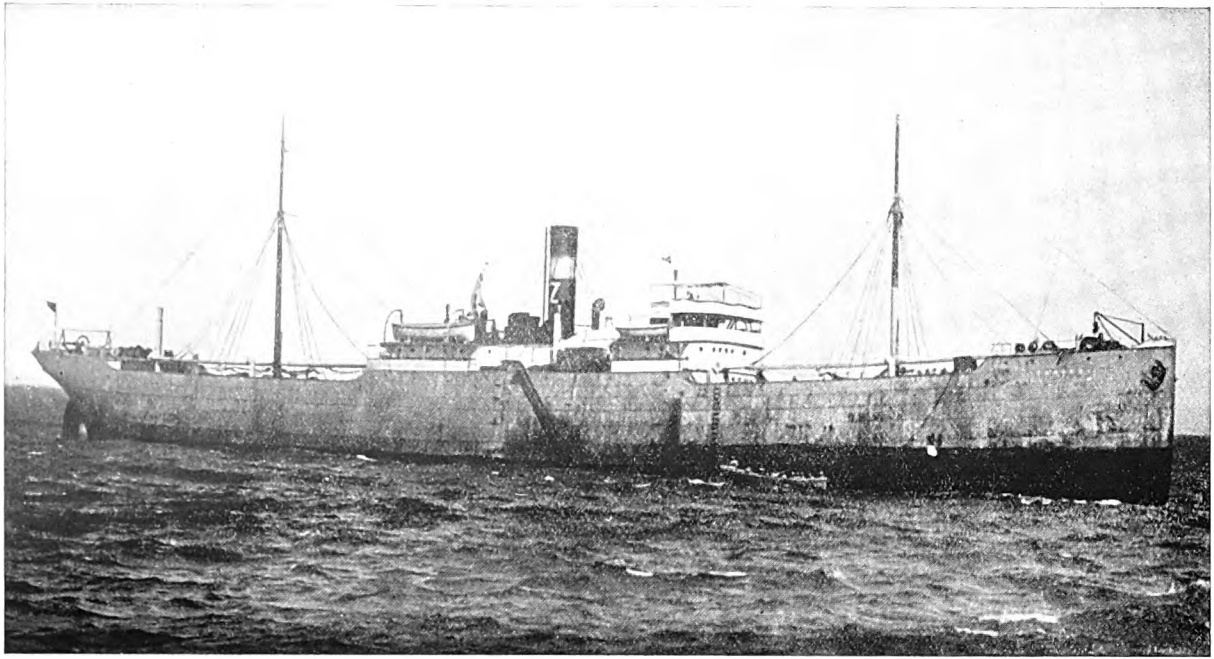

THE CAPTURE OF THE *Zambezi*, 12 AUGUST 1914

The *Encounter's* boarding party going alongside the vessel.

Lent by Stoker C. H. G. Maxwell, R.A.N.
Aust. War Memorial Collection No. A2217.

To face p. 17.

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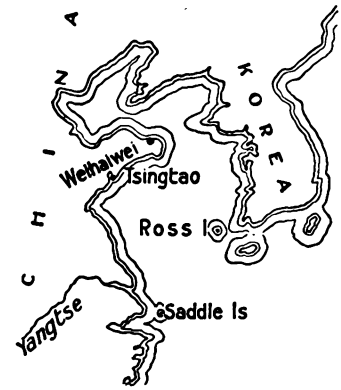
On the 7th of August orders from London had directed Patey to place himself in communication with Vice-Admiral Jerram[15] (commanding the China Squadron) for concerted action against the enemy ships in eastern waters. The operations of this squadron are therefore relevant to this history.

On the 28th of July, when Admiral Jerram received the Admiralty's warning order, he had the *Minotaur, Hampshire,* and *Yarmouth,* with five destroyers, at Weihaiwei, all ready for action. The light cruiser *Newcastle* was at Nagasaki. The obvious course, seeing that Germany was the probable enemy, was to stand southwards for about 200 miles and cruise off Tsingtao; and this Admiral Jerram proposed to do. But Admiralty orders, received just as he was starting, insisted on a previous concentration at Hong Kong, more than a thousand miles south of Tsingtao; so that the first operation undertaken by the squadron (and in war first movements are often two-thirds of the way towards a decision) was to steam actually past the chief enemy base and 1,000 miles farther away.[16] At Hong Kong it picked up the *Triumph,* which was in the middle of her quadrennial survey and refit, and was joined by the *Newcastle* and the French cruiser *Dupleix.*

On the 6th of August the Allied squadron left Hong Kong. The *Minotaur, Hampshire,* and *Newcastle* were almost at once detached to search for the *Emden,* which was understood to have left Tsingtao southwards, and might be expected to make for the nearest German islands, the western Carolines. The main squadron—*Triumph, Dupleix, Yarmouth,* and destroyers—made for the Saddle Islands in the estuary of the Yangtse, to establish there a base from which watch could be kept on Tsingtao; a patrol was then kept for some days along a line stretching from the



[15] Admiral Sir Martyn Jerram, G.C.M.G., K.C.B. C.-in-C. China Station, 1913/15; commanded Second Battle Squadron, 1915/16; of Alverstoke, Hants., Eng.; b. Chobham, Surrey, Eng., 6 Sept., 1858. Died 19 March, 1933.

[16] It will be remembered that the first movement of the Australian Squadron was also a 1,000-mile voyage away from the enemy. This resulted from the lack of bases for refitting and taking in stores anywhere north of Sydney.

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Yangtse mouth to Ross Island on the Korean coast. But the mischief was already done, for there were no warships left at Tsingtao.

The southern squadron made for Yap, and on the 12th the German wireless station there—one of the most important in the western Pacific, as it linked up Tsingtao with the German islands east and south-east—was destroyed by bombardment. This deprived the island population of much press news and a little guidance, and greatly hampered the enemy's arrangements for concentration and coaling; but it also deprived the Australian Navy of all chance of tracking down the German squadron. As long as communication with the *Scharnhorst* and its fellows was kept up by the powerful station at Yap, it could be intercepted—even though uninterpreted—by Australian stations.[17] When Yap was destroyed, the German authorities still managed to maintain intermittent communication by using the gear of the *Planet* (which was at Yap although Admiral Jerram was unaware of the fact), and also Angaur and intermediate ship-stations of low power, whose signals could not be intercepted at any great distance. From the 12th, therefore, even the slight indications that had previously been obtained of the whereabouts of the German squadron were lacking, and it vanished into a fog until the 8th of September.

On the 11th of August the Admiralty, believing that Japan would enter the war next day, ordered Admiral Jerram to leave trade protection north of Hong Kong to the Japanese, and to co-operate with the Australian Squadron in destroying the German cruisers. The news of Japan's probable entry proved premature; but certain steps were taken on it. The squadron broke up, the *Hampshire,* and later the *Minotaur,* going to Hong Kong, while the *Newcastle* was sent off by Admiralty orders to Vancouver. The northern patrolling ships meanwhile, since Japan had not yet declared war, closed in on Tsingtao and took several enemy merchant vessels. When on the 22nd of August the news of Japan's entry into the war was received, the squadron which had been blockading Tsingtao went north to Weihaiwei to coal.

[17] To hear Yap and the *Scharnhorst* talking was definite evidence that the enemy cruiser was within a certain radius of the island; and there was always the chance of picking up an interpretable message, such as the one mentioned above on *p. 10.*

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The entrance of Japan into the war entirely altered the duties of the China Squadron. The blockade of Tsingtao and the protection of trade northwards from Hong Kong were left to a Japanese squadron, to which were attached the *Triumph* and one destroyer. The Admiralty's wish was that the rest of the China Squadron should immediately join with the Australian in hunting down the German fleet. A memorandum of the 20th of August states:

> The Commander-in-Chief in China . . . should proceed himself immediately with *Minotaur, Hampshire,* and *Yarmouth* to Rabaul. . . . With the destruction of the German base in the Pacific and the hunting down of the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau,* the three heavy ships in China together with the *Australia* will become available for service in home waters for the climax of the Naval War.

This policy was approved and, as soon as Japan entered the war, the Admiralty telegraphed to Admiral Jerram that, the destruction of the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* being of first importance, he should sail with the *Minotaur, Hampshire,* and *Dupleix* to co-operate with Patey. Jerram, however, had received—from a mailbag captured aboard a German steamer—information which caused him to believe that the German squadron would make for the rich trade routes that pass the Dutch Indies. He had therefore telegraphed to the Admiralty his intention of making for Singapore; the Australian Squadron, he suggested, should search the Marshall Islands.

> I am not doing this myself, as the possibility of Germans being on trade routes is of first importance and there is ample naval force north of Australia.

Consequently his squadron—increased by two Japanese ships, the battle-cruiser *Ibuki* and the light cruiser *Chikuma*—was now based on Singapore and set to watch trade routes and anchorages in the Malay Archipelago. The search began on the 4th of September. The *Emden*—which it might have intercepted—had already escaped; she had passed Yap shortly after the wireless station was destroyed, and was on the 4th coaling off the western end of Sumatra.

Thus, not by the wish of the Australian authorities, the suggested co-operation of the China and Australian Squadrons fell through. The location and defeat of the main enemy had been the motive of all operations of the Australian

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Squadron up to the 17th of August. Admiral Patey constantly urged co-operation,[18] and vague promises had been received; but when on the 31st of August he suggested a sweep of the combined squadrons from Rabaul, Singapore found itself unable to agree. On the 16th of September, it is true, Admiral Jerram was contemplating the despatch of the *Minotaur* and *Ibuki* to Rabaul *viâ* Torres Straits; but just then the *Emden* made her presence felt in the Bay of Bengal, and the big German cruisers appeared off Apia—and with that all the Allied squadrons in the East were broken up and redistributed, and given quite new duties to perform.

V

The German warships in the Pacific in July, 1914, were:—

Scharnhorst, *Gneisenau*: Armoured cruisers launched in 1906, carrying eight 8.2-in. guns, with speeds of 21 and 24 knots respectively. Their displacement was 11,600 tons.

Leipzig: Launched 1905, speed 23 kn., displ. 3,250 tons

Nürnberg: Launched 1906, speed 23½ kn., displ. 3,450 tons.

Emden: Launched 1908, speed 24½ kn., displ. 3,600 tons.

These were light protected cruisers, carrying ten 4.1-in. guns.

Cormoran: A light unprotected cruiser of 1,600 tons, carrying eight 4.1-in. guns, speed about 16 knots.

The *Geier*, a sister-ship to the *Cormoran*, was on her way out from Europe. The surveying-ship *Planet* (650 tons, 10 knots) and the Government yacht *Komet* (977 tons) were in Melanesian waters. There were also in waters east of Singapore at least four German merchant vessels suitable for conversion into auxiliary cruisers—the *Yorck*, *Prinz Eitel Friedrich*, *Prinzess Alice*, and *Seydlitz*—and two Austrian Lloyd steamers, the *China* and *Silesia*.

The German naval base for the Pacific was at Tsingtao in China, the chief town of the colony of Kiaochao, an excellent and well-equipped port whose continued existence under

[18] On the 9th of August Admiral Jerram heard the *Australia* calling with a view to arranging co-operation; but the *Minotaur*, being on the way to Yap, and hoping to reach it before the *Emden*—a movement for which secrecy was essential—was forbidden to reply.

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German control the Allies could not afford to permit. It was especially for this reason that Japan was urged to enter the war; otherwise the China Squadron, which was not strong enough to blockade the port effectively, must have been pinned down to a station from which it could be observed with some success, and the Australian contingents might have been assigned to reduce it as their first task in the war. The entrance of Japan made all this unnecessary, and cut off German vessels in Eastern or Pacific waters from the one sure refuge they might have counted on.

The other German colonies in the East were Samoa (chief town Apia, with a poor harbour) and German New Guinea (chief town Rabaul, on an excellent harbour), with its subordinate administrations in the Marshalls[19] (chief settlement, Jabor in Jaluit), and the Eastern and Western Carolines (chief settlements, Ponape and Yap). The Western Carolines also included the Pelew and Marianne groups. The value and importance of these island colonies will be more generally discussed in the next chapter; here we are concerned merely with their existence.

Quick communication with the world at large was maintained by submarine cables from Yap to Guam (and the United States), to Shanghai (and Tsingtao), and to Menado in Celebes, whence there was connection with the main cables to Europe. Communication between the settlements was mainly kept up by wireless; there were high-powered stations at Tsingtao, Yap, Nauru, and Apia, and at the beginning of the war a fifth was in course of construction at Bitapaka near Rabaul. At Angaur in the Western Carolines, Truk in the Eastern, and Jabor in the Marshalls there were low-powered stations under private control. All the warships were fitted with wireless plant.

We have already seen that at the outbreak of war the whereabouts of the principal German warships was entirely unknown. Two of the three light cruisers were vaguely located, the *Emden* at Tsingtao, the *Nürnberg* on the coast of America; the *Geier* was known to be near Singapore on her way east. The two big cruisers might be anywhere; and they were the vessels of vital importance. Any sound

[19] Nauru was attached to this group.

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information about them would have simplified Australian naval operations enormously. As it was, dependence had to be placed on probabilities, vague rumours, all of which proved incorrect, and indications gathered from the interception of wireless messages, which did in fact give the bearings of the German ships, but were hopelessly at fault as to their distance from Australia. The only good guess at their doings was made by Admiral Patey about the middle of August; having made sure that they were not in the neighbourhood of Rabaul, he put forward the hypothesis that they

> had retired towards the northward or eastward, possibly towards Nauru, with the object of completing with coal and then probably proceeding eastwards or south-eastwards to the American coast—perhaps calling at Samoa on the way.[20]

This was, in fact, exactly what they did.

The action to be adopted by the German cruiser squadron in case of hostilities was governed by instructions issued by the German Admiralty to its oversea squadrons before the war. Principal among these was a general order that, in case of war with England or with a coalition to which England was a party, German warships in distant waters were to conduct a "cruiser-war." Vessels not in themselves suitable for such operations were to make use of their crews in fitting out auxiliary cruisers. The object of a cruiser-war was specified—the destruction of the enemy's commerce, the protection of German commerce, and the diversion of the greatest possible portion of the enemy's naval forces. "In any war in which England is the opponent of the German Empire, the destruction of English commerce and of the sea traffic between England and her colonies is of the first importance."[21] It was recognised that the greatest opportunities for this would be those offered at the beginning of hostilities. Operations against warships were permissible, if necessary for achieving

[20] Admiral Patey telegraphed, on the 19th of August, through the Naval Board to Admiral Jerram: "There appears to be no doubt that the Germans are collecting large supplies of coal and concentrating somewhere north-east of New Britain. Believe that main body will make across Pacific either east or south-east, possibly visiting Samoa and Tahiti. Probably auxiliary cruisers will be left to work from base in Pacific islands on China, Pacific, and Australian track. . . ." This remarkable forecast proved correct in almost every particular.

[21] From the German Official Naval History (*Der Krieg zur See, 1914-1918*)—*Der Kreuzerkrieg in den Ausländischen Gewässern, by Vice-Admiral E. Raeder, Vol. I, p. 28.*

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the objects of a war upon commerce, but only in specially propitious circumstances, and if the German force was greater than—or at least equal to—that which it would engage.

Dealing with the several regions in which cruiser-war should be carried on, the instructions laid down that this campaign would be most effective in Atlantic waters where the trade-routes to Great Britain converged; and that there it would best be conducted by swift German merchantmen converted into cruisers, although the ships of the German East and West American stations would also take part. In the Indian Ocean the most promising objective would be the trade-routes converging at the entrance of the Red Sea; and the responsibility for these operations would fall in the first place upon the German warships of the East African station, which were to be careful not to allow themselves to be shut up at the outbreak of war.

But the chief German oversea cruiser-squadron (referred to in German naval writings simply as "the cruiser squadron") was that stationed in the Pacific. For this ocean the policy laid down was that of swiftly withdrawing the squadron at the outbreak of war to some unknown position, with the object of keeping the British in uncertainty as to its whereabouts. The British would thus be forced to split their forces in order to search for it, and not only would their trade in those waters be brought to a standstill, but opportunities might occur for attacking with success their separated warships. If the conditions at the commencement were especially propitious, there might even come up for consideration a direct attack on the British naval forces, with the object of crippling British commerce by obtaining control of those seas. It was, however, made clear, both in these instructions and in the deliberations which preceded their issue, that the rôle of the German naval forces in a commerce-war against England must be—not to attack the British naval forces but as far as possible to evade them, since the damage received by German ships, even in a successful fight, might prevent them from causing or prolonging the paralysis of British commerce, which must be "the chief aim of all operations." To maintain its oversea squadrons in this cruiser-war the German Admiralty, which did not, like the British,

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possess convenient coaling-stations in every sea, had organised in various foreign ports a number of bases, controlled by German naval staffs or agencies. These were charged with procuring coal and other supplies for the fleets, and with obtaining naval intelligence, distributing it to the German Admiralty or to warships, or relaying it from one to the other. Provision of this nature had been made in Tsingtao, Tokyo, Shanghai, Manila, Batavia, and on the Pacific coasts of North and South America.[22]

The mobilisation instructions, redrafted in 1914—in accordance with these general arrangements—by the commander of the German "East Asia Squadron," Vice-Admiral Count von Spee, laid down that—to avoid being shut up in Tsingtao—the German squadron must, as soon as danger of war with England arose, put to sea fully equipped and attack English commerce. This, it was said, might be done most profitably in Japanese, Chinese, and Malaysian waters or, as a possible alternative, in Australian and Indian seas. Of the German warships on the Australian station—the old light cruisers *Geier* and *Cormoran* and the surveying ship *Planet*[23]—the *Planet* (having no fighting value) would make for Yap to protect and garrison the island; the *Geier* and *Cormoran* would, if possible, fit out German merchant-ships as auxiliary cruisers, and for this purpose, taking with them any such vessels as were to hand, should seek to join the auxiliary ships of the main squadron at any of the rendezvous prearranged for the latter. On the way they were to use the opportunity for commerce destroying.

It was recognised by von Spee that, while his force was nearly equal to that of the British China Squadron proper, two contingencies might at any moment arise by which that condition would be changed: the first would be the bringing up of the Australian Squadron; the second the entry of Japan into the war. Upon the first of these possibilities the German official history comments as follows:[24]

The situation as regards the relative strengths on the China, Australian, and East Indian Station (at the outbreak of war) . . . if

[22] German naval agencies were also established for similar purposes in North America (Atlantic coast), West Indies, Brazil, La Plata, and West Africa.

[23] Both the *Geier* and *Cormoran*, however, were absent from the Australian station at the outbreak of war, the *Geier* being near Singapore and the *Cormoran* under repair at Tsingtao.

[24] *Der Kreuzerkrieg, Vol. I, p. 45.*

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no account is taken of the battle cruiser *Australia*, was not absolutely unfavourable for the German fighting force in East Asia. By bringing up the *Australia* the British could, it is true, at any time establish an unconditional superiority over the German naval forces.[25]

It was von Spee's intention to meet this contingency by avoiding direct conflict with the *Australia*, and continuing his cruiser-war until she and her consorts drove him—as he expected they would after "a short time"—to seek other seas.[26] In case of the entry of Japan the German cruiser squadron must—according to the instructions drawn up by its commander—withdraw from East Asia to "more distant waters."

On the 28th of June, 1914, the two armoured cruisers *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*, and the collier *Titania*, left Nagasaki in order to carry out a long pre-arranged cruise in the German islands, beginning with the Carolines and Marshalls. From these they were to go on to Samoa, Fiji, and Bougainville, reaching the Bismarck Archipelago late in August, and returning at the end of September to Tsingtao. During the absence of Count von Spee upon this cruise, the captain of the *Emden* was left as senior officer in Chinese waters. On the 29th of June the latter received from Tsingtao the news of the assassination at Sarajevo, and passed it on to his admiral, then on the way to the South Sea. The first news of tension was received by the two armoured cruisers at Truk (an island about the centre of the Carolines, and 1,500 miles due north of the easternmost point of New Guinea) on the 7th of July. Von Spee was warned from Berlin that the political situation was not free from anxiety, and that he should wait in Truk or Ponape (450 miles farther east) pending its development. The situation might be expected to become clear within eight or ten days. Other information followed daily. On the 11th the German Admiralty advised him: "England probably an opponent if it comes to war." From that day onwards a high degree of readiness was maintained in the squadron.

[25] The British battleship *Triumph*, being of slow speed, could (according to the German official historian) be tactically eliminated, thus rendering the German squadron equal in strength to the British China Squadron. The British destroyers might, however, cause much annoyance to the German squadron if it had to operate in Chinese coastal waters.

[26] On the 2nd of August he was informed by a telegram whose information was based on inquiry made at the German General Consulate in Sydney that, in case of war, the *Australia* and three other cruisers of the Australian fleet would patrol on the Australian *and China* stations.

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On the 15th of July von Spee with his two cruisers and the *Titania*—then in course of conversion into an auxiliary cruiser—left Truk, and, reaching Ponape on the 17th, gave orders for the concentration in Tsingtao of most of the smaller fry of his squadron. The light cruiser *Nürnberg,* which was expected at Honolulu from America on the 27th, was ordered to join him at Ponape which she would reach about August 5th. On the 27th of July he was informed that diplomatic relations between Serbia and Austria-Hungary had been broken off, and on the same day there was received by German warships a general warning—the first issued by the German Government as distinguished from the Admiralty—to the effect that England was "maintaining a waiting attitude." On the 29th came a more reassuring telegram: "It appears England will mediate, France shrinks from war, Russia still undecided"; but on the 30th the news again darkened, and next day von Spee was informed from Berlin that German merchant shipping had been warned on the 30th. Early on the 1st of August the *Emden* and the main squadron were notified that there was danger of war with Great Britain, France, and Russia. This telegram seems to have been the recognised official warning of imminent danger of war. It was passed on by the *Scharnhorst* to the *Geier, Planet,* and *Nürnberg;* the governors of German New Guinea, Samoa, and the officials at Yap also received notice, and German merchant-ships in East Asia and the South Sea were warned by wireless. During the next three days von Spee was informed of the outbreak of war with Russia and France; the news of England's declaration of war reached him on the 5th of August.

During these days of uncertainty he had to determine as far as possible the action of his squadron in accordance with the principles previously agreed upon between himself and the German Admiralty. A summary of his deliberations, which is preserved in his own handwriting in the war diary of his squadron, apparently under date of the end of July, displays an accurate understanding of the situation and sound judgment of its possibilities. Referring to the mobilisation instructions previously drawn up by himself, he writes:

In case of wars B and C (i.e., against France, Russia, and England) without complication with Japan, war upon commerce is possible so

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long as the coal supply holds out, but—in view of the fact that it is probably intended to bring up the Australian warships—it is only possible for a short time. If Japan imposes conditions in order to avoid the moral obligation of translating into action her alliance with England, this would render impossible the plan of carrying on a cruiser-war in the waters of East Asia. For this event, therefore, I propose to follow a similar course of action to that in a war in which Japan is a direct opponent; for which, in accordance with plan, a withdrawal from East Asia is already intended. . . . In the case of war C (against England), if Japan imposes conditions, the cruiser squadron had best go with the main body to the west coast of America, because the coal supply is surest in that region, and the squadron can probably hold out longest there. To stay in the Indian Ocean, with coal supply from the Dutch Indies, is on the other hand much too uncertain.

On the same day on which he learnt of England's entry into the war, von Spee received from Berlin the following message: "Chile a benevolent[27] neutral. Japan neutral so long as no attack is directed against the English sphere in East Asia." This was the contingency in which he had proposed to move his squadron precisely as if Japan were in the war—to "more distant seas," an expression by which the Indian Ocean and Australian and South American waters appear to have been connoted. The decision actually lay between the Indian Ocean and South America, since a descent —which von Spee had been planning—upon the Malacca Strait would infringe Japan's conditions and bring her into the war. On the 5th of August he telegraphed through Yap to the German Admiralty[28] that, in the circumstances, he intended, if his coal supply was sufficient, to leave the Eastern Asiatic station and either carry on cruiser-war in the Indian Ocean or seek touch with home round South America. Concerning the first of these alternatives his chief of staff noted next day in the war diary:[29] "For cruiser-war in the Indian Ocean the area west of Colombo to Aden, where the East Asiatic and Australian lines (meat supply for England) converge, comes up principally for consideration; or else the Australian coast." Information, however, to the effect that the British China Squadron was moving south led to the inference that the British suspected this design, and were *en route* "to unite with the Australian Squadron and bar our way." Moreover

[27] The German word is *wohlwollend*—"well-wishing."
[28] This message did not reach Germany.
[29] *Der Kreuzerkrieg, Vol. I, p. 76.*

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throughout these deliberations the probable difficulty of securing from the Dutch Indies a reliable coal supply weighed most heavily with von Spee. British pressure, he thought, would force Holland to impose undue restrictions. In his telegram of the 5th he had asked that coal should be sent to Chile; and an additional impulse towards seeking the South American coast was afforded by the consideration that, while it offered as good a base for him as for his opponents, Japan, if she entered the war, might not be able to operate there freely without risking serious opposition from America. For the moment, however, both the attitude of Japan and the extent of his own coal supply were unknown factors. He ordered his squadron and its colliers to concentrate on the 10th and 11th of August at Pagan Island in the Mariannes—a point about 1,200 miles north-west of Ponape and approximately equidistant from Hakodate, Tsingtao, Shanghai, Amoy, and the Celebes. "A final plan," he wrote in the war diary,[30] "cannot be drawn up until we have before us a general estimate of the coal supply concentrated at the rendezvous."

On the 6th of August, immediately after the arrival of the *Nürnberg,* the squadron left for Pagan, the German naval agencies in East Asia having been ordered to direct their colliers to that point. It was to this concentration that the message of the 3rd of August from Yap, already mentioned[31]—"You must go to Marianne Islands"—evidently referred. The main squadron reached Pagan on the 11th, and was next day joined by the *Emden,* which arrived from Tsingtao with the converted liner *Prinz Eitel Friedrich,* and by a number of colliers and provision ships from Shanghai and other ports.[32] Although the rendezvous afforded merely an anchorage, coaling and provisioning were at once begun, and an important conference was held. By this time von Spee had received, through wireless from various sources, warnings of the probable entry of Japan into the war, the most definite being those from the German naval attaché in Tokyo. In consequence of the destruction of the German wireless station at

[30] *Der Kreuzerkrieg, Vol. I, p. 76.*
[31] *See p. 10.*
[32] These ships were the *Holsatia, Mark, Gouverneur Jäschke, Staatssecretär Krätke, Yorck, Longmoon, Prinz Waldemar,* and *Markomannia.*

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Yap, however, an important telegram from this officer on the night of the 12th was received only in mutilated form, the passages in brackets being undecypherable:

Tokyo. [I recommend that upon Japan's] declaration of war [the cruiser squadron should] withdraw to [the west coast of South America] as the enemy fleet will probably make for the South Seas. Naval attaché.

In place of the words "west coast of South America" the message as received read "Chile." Uncertain though his information was, Japan's attitude led von Spee to hasten the withdrawal of his squadron by making for the Marshalls (about 1,200 miles to the south-east of Pagan and 1,600 north-east of Rabaul). Orders were accordingly given that it should leave Pagan immediately—on the 13th.[33] That morning at a conference on board the *Scharnhorst,* after stressing the advantages to be obtained by concealing as long as possible the position and intentions of his squadron, he explained his purpose of withdrawing to the west coast of America. The captain of the *Emden,* however, put forward the view that such a course placed undue emphasis on the advantages of maintaining "a fleet in being," since it would render the squadron practically ineffective for several months. He urged that at least one light cruiser should be despatched to the Indian Ocean to harry British commerce in that promising region. This suggestion von Spee decided ultimately to adopt, and, as the boilers of the *Nürnberg* were defective, he allotted the task to the *Emden.* As he had informed the conference, he at this time entertained serious doubts whether his proper course might not be to take his whole squadron to the Indian Ocean. But against this there weighed considerations not only of coal supply but also of preserving the neutrality of Japan, since an attack upon British commerce even in Indian seas might conceivably give the Japanese cause for acting upon their treaty of alliance with Great Britain.

Accordingly on the afternoon of the 13th of August the first step in the final withdrawal to the east was taken. Leaving behind him directions for four merchant steamers which had not yet joined the fleet, he put to sea that evening, the *Prinz Eitel Friedrich* leaving first, with the eight colliers,

[33] Von Spee had also been informed that certain Japanese naval movements towards the South Seas were in progress, and that the *Australia* was on her way to Hong Kong.

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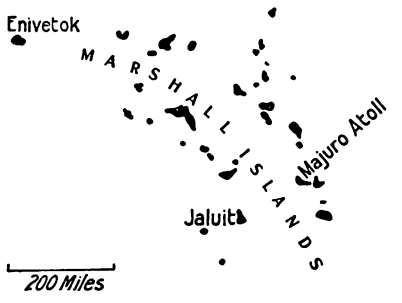
and the four cruisers and *Titania* following, the whole fleet heading for Enivetok in the western Marshalls. On the second day out from Pagan the *Emden* and the best collier, *Markomannia,* were detached for their operations in the Indian Ocean. The wireless traffic was closely observed both to obtain additional news concerning the attitude of Japan and to ascertain, from the strength and nature of the signals, the position of British and Japanese warships. The silence of Yap had been noted on the 12th of August, and the activity of British wireless on the following night gave a clue to the cause. "It must thence be assumed," wrote von Spee's chief of staff, "that we are being systematically sought for." The official history states[34] that, in the observation of the wireless, "naturally especial attention was devoted to the battle cruiser *Australia,*" which von Spee, writing to his wife on the 18th of August, described as "in itself an adversary so much stronger than our squadron that we should be bound to avoid it." On the 17th he learnt by wireless from Nauru that the Australian Squadron including its flagship had been sighted on the 12th at Blanche Bay, steaming south. "From this," he noted,[35] "it appears that the Australian Squadron is being employed in searching the German protected territories in which we were suspected to be lying. The destruction of Yap on the 12th of August must have been carried out by other ships. It is not likely—so long as wireless signals are given out by Nauru—that the enemy has turned towards the Marshalls." At dawn on the 19th the *Nürnberg* was sent ahead to reconnoitre Enivetok, an atoll at the eastern end of that group and, upon ascertaining that it was clear, the squadron at midday entered the lagoon, an excellent harbour, and began to coal.



Here news reached von Spee by wireless—relayed in a mutilated form through the *Emden*—of Japan's ultimatum. The message as received stated that Japan demanded that

[34] *Der Kreuzerkrieg, Vol. I, p. 120.* [35] In the war diary.

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all German warships must be withdrawn from East Asiatic waters by the 5th of September. It was not until the auxiliary cruiser *Cormoran* joined the fleet on the 27th of August that von Spee ascertained the true terms—involving a demand that Germany must leave Tsingtao. By then news had already been received that Japan had declared war, and the *Cormoran's* information merely confirmed it. Meanwhile the squadron had on the 22nd sailed from Enivetok for Majuro (800 miles distant, near the eastern end of the Marshalls), leaving behind several empty colliers. Here it was practically safe from discovery, and yet handy to pick up what news might come along to the main dépôt at Jabor, in Jaluit, 140 miles to the south-east. The *Nürnberg* was sent to Honolulu with despatches and with orders for coal to be despatched from San Francisco to Mas a Tierra, Port Low, and Valparaiso.[36] It was also desired to obtain news of which, since the destruction of the wireless plant at Yap, the squadron had been almost totally deprived. The position of British ships could be judged only by their wireless, which on the 21st of August had appeared considerably stronger. On the 26th—the day before reaching Majuro—connection by wireless had been established with the *Geier*.

At Majuro the auxiliary cruiser *Cormoran* with two colliers joined the squadron. The *Cormoran* had formerly been the *Riasan* of the Russian volunteer fleet, which was captured by the *Emden* on the night of the 3rd of August, and was subsequently commissioned at Tsingtao with the crew of the obsolete cruiser *Cormoran*. Von Spee, however, was inclined to regard the auxiliaries as of slight value, on account of their slow speed and considerable coal-consumption; and when, on the 30th of August, his squadron sailed from Majuro the *Prinz Eitel Friedrich* and *Cormoran* were detached to carry on cruiser-war in west Australian waters, the collier *Mark* being allotted to them. For their future coal supply they were to get in touch with the *Emden* and *Geier*, and

[36] The *Nürnberg* also embarked at Honolulu thirty-seven German reservists, mostly from the *Pommern*, who managed to slip aboard without the knowledge of the United States authorities, and who replaced a number of Chinese previously serving in the warships.

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with German agencies at Batavia and Manila. If their mission proved impossible they must endeavour to return to the squadron.

Meanwhile the two armoured cruisers, with the *Titania* and the four remaining colliers, headed for Christmas Island, roughly speaking another 2,200 miles to east-south-east. That night (the 30th of August) the *Australia*[37] was heard in wireless conversation with the New Zealand station at Awanui, and on the following night wireless signals were caught from the Japanese battle-cruiser *Kongo*. On the 1st of September, as the squadron neared the 180th meridian, the *Australia* was heard "loud"[38] and the *Kongo* "very loud"; the next evening both ships were heard less strongly. On the night of the 31st Nauru was observed repeatedly calling Apia without answer, and afterwards informing Rabaul: "Samoa closed since yesterday." On von Spee's attempting to transmit through Nauru to Apia instructions for the despatch of a collier to Easter Island, he received from Nauru the answer that Apia was now out of touch; on the 3rd of September he learnt by wireless from the *Nürnberg* of the occupation of Samoa. On the 6th, at a rendezvous near Palmyra Island, the *Nürnberg* rejoined but was on the same day detached with the *Titania* to destroy the British cable station on Fanning Island,[39] the main part of the squadron standing by in support, forty miles away, until it was informed that no enemy ships were in sight. The course was then directed to Christmas Island, which was reached the same afternoon, the *Nürnberg* and *Titania* here rejoining.[40]

It was at Christmas Island that the German commander planned the descent upon Samoa which, on the 14th of September, rent the veil hitherto covering the movements of his squadron. The narrative, however, must now for a moment turn to the other German warships whose movements especially concerned the Australian navy.

[37] The *Australia* was then at Samoa, a fact which was unknown to von Spee.
[38] She was then near the same meridian on her return journey from Samoa.
[39] About 200 miles north-west of Christmas Island. An account of the raid is given in *Appendix No. 15.*
[40] Two nights later (according to the German official narrative) two American ships were heard in wireless conversation. One said: "All business is at a standstill in Australia. No one knows who has done it, and they are scared to death." The historian rightly conjectures that this could not in any way be taken as literally correct! His inference that sea *commerce* in Australian waters was now being crippled by von Spee's action in maintaining uncertainty as to his whereabouts is not entirely justified. The chief effect was to restrict the transport of *troops.*

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The adventures of the *Komet* and those of the *Emden* are narrated later. On the 26th of July the little *Planet* was quarantined in Blanche Bay, but was regularly used as a wireless station communicating with Nauru, whose official messages to Governor Haber were always addressed "*Planet* Rabaul für Gouverneur." Late on the 1st of August, in accordance with orders received from von Spee, she left Rabaul for Yap. She carried only four 1.5-inch guns, but, her captain, addressing his crew, said—

> If we meet an enemy ship, however large, we shall attack her, and show her that we can injure her with our puny guns, and can die like seamen.

However she arrived safely and her crew was used to garrison the settlement, and was actually entrenching the regular landing-place when Admiral Jerram in the *Minotaur* reached the island on the 12th and destroyed the wireless station by bombardment. As the *Minotaur* kept well out to sea, and was not interested in the settlement, the defensive measures of the garrison passed unnoticed. The commander of the *Planet* now erected his ship's wireless-plant on shore, using coconut palms for masts. This station, with a radius of 500 miles, was in use by the 22nd of August. Meanwhile the crew of *Survey Boat III* from near Truk had arrived and joined the garrison. The N.D.L. steamer *Prinzess Alice,* which soon afterwards reached Yap from Manila with a number of reservists, was sent on to join the *Emden,* there being no weapons for them on the island. On the 29th of September wireless signals of the *Australia* were heard with such distinctness that an attack by her was apprehended. The whole garrison, therefore, with the exception of the wireless personnel and a few sick, was taken aboard the *Cormoran,* then in harbour, which forthwith sailed for New Guinea, intending to employ this force in raiding the newly-established Australian garrison at Friedrich Wilhelm Harbour. The *Planet* herself was sunk by the Germans at Yap on the 7th of October upon the approach of a Japanese squadron.

The *Leipzig* remained in American waters; we shall hear of her again.[41] The *Geier* disappeared for several months. Admiral Patey in September heard that early in August she

[41] *See p. 110.*

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had been at Käwieng in New Ireland—a report which, as will be seen, was misleading in respect of the date. The German official history of the naval war states that in June she was ordered from East Africa to Australian waters to replace the *Condor,* and at the outbreak of war had reached the Java Sea *viâ* the Straits of Malacca. Her standing war orders were to fit out auxiliary cruisers if possible, and to seek to join the auxiliary ships of the cruiser squadron at any one of their assembly stations. On the 1st of August the German Admiralty ordered her by wireless to proceed to Yap and await further orders from the cruisers, which were stationed at Ponape. News received next day from Batavia that Holland was mobilising made her shy of entering a Dutch port, and on the 6th she coaled from a German vessel off Tanah Djampea. All this time she had no certain news about the entry of England into the war, and dared not either proceed openly through Malaysian waters to Yap or attempt to attack English traders that she might meet; French and Russian merchant-vessels did not frequent those seas. So she dodged about round Celebes and Jilolo, trailing along at nine to ten knots (her best speed), and calling to Yap and Angaur wireless stations with hopelessly unsatisfactory results. She knew nothing, neither the whereabouts of the cruisers nor the state of the war nor the identity of her enemies. She crawled up to Meliel in the Pelews; she crawled down to Offak Bay in Waigeu, north of Dampier Strait—and there at last, on the 18th, she picked up wireless signals from the *Emden,* and heard that Britain was in the war and Japan might be in at any moment.

In the afternoon of the 20th the *Emden* and *Geier* met, and von Müller planned a campaign for the smaller ship. She was to proceed first to Angaur, and send to Majuro a couple of colliers she would find waiting there; then to Yap to transmit the news of Japan's attitude and any other news that might interest the *Scharnhorst* (the *Emden* had been unable to raise the *Scharnhorst* hitherto); if, as was hoped, the Yap wireless station had been repaired, the *Geier* must stay there to aid in defending it against further attacks—if it was still out of order or could not raise the *Scharnhorst,* she

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must hurry off towards Majuro, establish communication with the cruiser squadron as quickly as possible, and take orders from von Spee.

So off went the little *Geier* to Angaur and Malakal, where she met three colliers and a government yacht from Yap with important Admiralty orders for the squadron. She was told that the *Planet* had re-established a wireless service at Yap. The *Geier's* commander now thought fit to make new plans of his own; he sent off two colliers direct to Majuro, setting his own course first for New Hanover *viâ* Manus, as the Australian coal he was using was very poor and he was running short of water and provisions. At New Hanover water was unobtainable, so he ran on to Käwieng in New Ireland, which he reached on the 30th of August. At Manus the *Geier* had taken on some Japanese coal, but found it even worse than the Australian, so that she dared not attempt the long direct journey to Majuro, but had to call on the way at Kusaie in the eastern Carolines, where, on the 4th of September, she found the British steamer *Southport,* quite ignorant that a war was raging. The *Geier's* captain now bethought himself of the Hague Convention of 1907, and decided that he would not treat the *Southport* as a prize, but merely take from her (giving a receipt for them) such supplies as he needed and disable her engines so that she could not get away and disclose his whereabouts; the protests of the *Southport's* master against being stranded at Kusaie with scanty provender met with the reply that she was not a prize, that the *Geier's* captain was therefore not responsible for her crew's welfare, and that she could probably get from the natives on the island all the provisions that were really necessary.[42]

On the 7th of September the *Geier* once more started for Majuro, but her bottom was foul and her boilers unsound, and seven knots was her best speed. On the 11th she reached her destination, to find that the cruiser squadron had been gone nearly a fortnight—to South America, her captain guessed. For the *Geier* so long a voyage was now impossible. Leaving the Marshalls on the 20th, she struggled on

[42] The Germans disabled the *Southport's* engines as thoroughly as possible; but the master and chief engineer patched them up with considerable skill, procured from the natives a quantity of coconuts and other native food, and on the 18th of September very daringly put to sea, reaching Brisbane (more than 2,000 miles away) on the 30th.

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towards San Francisco, coaling occasionally with great difficulty from her collier, by which also, in order to save her coal, she was often towed along. On the 6th of October she found herself east of the Sandwich Islands, cruised there for a week undecidedly, and on the 15th, having failed to patch up her boilers, ran into Honolulu. News of this reached the Allies on the 15th of October, and it was conjectured that the *Geier* might be attempting to refit. At any rate the Japanese squadron thought it worth while to station two ships—the cruiser *Asama* and the battleship *Hizen*—off Honolulu to watch her, until on the 8th of November the American authorities decided to intern her. Although she did little actual damage, the uncertainty as to her whereabouts proved extremely hampering to British and Australian movements in the western Pacific, and delayed both the departure of the Australian convoy to Egypt and that of the expedition[43] which was organised by the Australian Government to take over Yap from the Japanese.

It remains to follow the adventures of the two auxiliary cruisers *Cormoran* and *Prinz Eitel Friedrich* which, with the collier *Mark*, were despatched by von Spee from the Marshalls on August 30th to undertake operations against Australian commerce.[44] The *Cormoran* (formerly the Russian *Riasan*, which had been captured by the *Emden*) was a steamer of 3,522 tons and, apparently, about 14 knots speed. She carried eight 4.1 inch guns, and was manned by the crew of the old cruiser *Cormoran*. The *Prinz Eitel Friedrich*, a North German Lloyd cargo boat, converted at Tsingtao on the outbreak of war, was of 8,797 tons and 15 knots, carried four 4.1 and six 3.5 inch guns, and was manned by the crews of the gunboats *Tiger* and *Luchs*. The two ships were to have the full benefit of such arrangements as the German naval agencies at Shanghai, Batavia, and Manila could make for their coaling, and were given by von Spee copies of the telegrams that had passed between him and those staffs. The destruction of German wireless stations, however, prevented orders from reaching the agencies in time to be effectively carried out or modified according to the needs of the hour. The two cruisers were thus from the first hampered by

[43] *See pp. 130-37.* [44] *See p. 32.*

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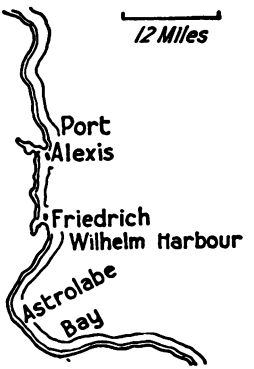
difficulties of coal supply, which eventually put every military task into the background. Steaming by separate routes to their first rendezvous on the way to Western Australia, they duly met one another there, but found no collier. The commander of the *Cormoran* (Korvetten-Kapitän Zuckschwerdt), who knew the station well, proposed that the *Prinz Eitel Friedrich* should make for Angaur (Western Carolines), where 2,000 tons of coal were believed to be, while he himself endeavoured to obtain some from Dutch sources, apparently at the Celebes, which was on his route towards Western Australian waters. The *Prinz Eitel Friedrich* (Korvetten-Kapitän Thirichens) accordingly made for Angaur, and found her collier at the neighbouring island of Malakal. But the *Cormoran,* which now hoisted a Russian flag, obtained no fuel from the Dutch, and was thus forced about the 13th of September to turn back to Yap in order to seek touch with the German naval agencies.

The two merchant cruisers now gave up their plan of operating to the west of Australia. For three weeks the N.D.L. steamer *Anghin,* with 2,000 tons of coal, waited vainly for them at Nusa Bessi Island off the eastern extremity of Timor—whither she had been despatched from Manila on the 4th of September—and was then compelled to seek provisions and water in Sourabaya, where the Dutch authorities forced her to discharge most of her coal. The *Cormoran,* which reached Yap on the 17th, was now to rejoin her consort and some colliers about the end of September at Port Grand Duke Alexis, New Guinea, and thereafter both would carry on cruiser-war off the eastern—instead of the western—coast of Australia. But the meeting never took place. Leaving Yap on the 19th, the *Cormoran* reached Port Alexis on the 24th, the very day on which—as will presently be told[45]—an Australian force in the



[45] *See p. 102.*

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Berrima, escorted by the *Australia, Montcalm,* and *Encounter,* occupied Friedrich Wilhelm Harbour, only twelve miles away. According to a German account[46]—

A British cruiser came from Friedrich Wilhelm Harbour and entered the bay while another kept watch outside; but the *Cormoran* hid in a narrow winding channel forming a side entrance to the bay, and overhung by dense impenetrable jungle. Neither smoke nor sound betrayed her presence. At nightfall the British cruiser steamed away . . . and the *Cormoran* escaped under cover of dark.

The *Cormoran's* presence was of course unsuspected, and the special attention supposed to have been given to the bay by the Australians was possibly imaginary, but the situation must have been a tense one for the Germans. The *Cormoran,* which left one of her boats (a large iron life-boat) for the use of the local mission and also dumped ashore the carriage of a 12½-pounder Krupp gun, now returned to Yap, which she reached on the 28th. There, as has already been mentioned, on the *Australia's* wireless being heard the whole garrison—that is, the crews of the *Planet* and *Survey Boat III*—except a few men still in hospital, was hurriedly taken aboard and the *Cormoran* left again on the 30th for New Guinea, intending to employ this force in raiding the newly-established Australian garrison at Friedrich Wilhelm Harbour (Madang). From this intention she appears to have been turned by a false alarm.

You can picture the turmoil with all the crowd of people on board (wrote one who sailed on her). At 6 o'clock we were approaching our destination, but here was a nice mess! There were five ships lying off the place including the *Australia.*

How this impression was received is unknown, for the *Australia* and her three consorts had been back in Rabaul by the 26th. But the air was at this time full of wireless signals, and the Germans felt themselves to be hunted on all sides. The *Cormoran* put about and returned to Yap,[47] where she

[46] By Kapitänleutnant Otto Brauer, first executive officer of the *Prinz Eitel Friedrich,* which called at Port Alexis, four days later.

[47] Through the fact that certain data have only recently become available, the explanation here given for the abandonment of the intended raid differs from that given in *Volume X* of this series. It is true that some time after the event rumours of the plan and of its miscarriage reached Australians in New Guinea through German residents there. According to these reports, the *Cormoran's* captain had been dissuaded by the district officer who himself had sailed aboard her. He, it was said, urged that the raid might be considered a violation of the ex-Governor's pledge that no resistance should be offered; the attempt therefore might only result in trouble for Germans still residing in New Guinea. It is possible that these views were laid before the *Cormoran's* captain at Port Alexis on the 24th of September, although it is obvious that the ex-Governor's pledge could not be binding on the German Navy.

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almost ran into a real enemy, sighting the battleship *Satsuma* off the entrance. She herself escaping observation in a rain-storm, made for a lonely island—apparently Samutrik—in the Western Carolines. There, in a beautiful little bay, she sheltered, repairing her boiler and engines and vainly endeavouring to secure coal. In order to conserve her small stock, fuel was obtained by cutting down trees, but this barely sufficed to keep the electric lighting machinery at work. Eventually even the lights failed, and improvised oil-lamps had to be used. Except for rice and Russian salt beef, the food of the crew was coconuts, of which 450 were brought aboard daily, 200 for drinking, the rest for eating. A cutter was purchased from the solitary European inhabitant, and in this three of the *Cormoran's* officers with a crew of natives sailed out to seek coal. The German agencies in the Pacific had indeed made constant efforts to provide it, but their task was now being rendered almost impossible by the close watch maintained by the British upon neutral ports. The steamer *Elmshorn,* which the German staff at Manila had endeavoured on the 27th of September to despatch to Port Alexis, had been prevented by the British auxiliary cruiser *Himalaya* from leaving port. To meet the *Cormoran's* need, the agency now bought 7,000 tons in San Francisco and another 7,000 in Durban, both consignments to be brought to the cruiser. Each plan, however, miscarried, as did several renewed endeavours to break the blockade at Manila, the British warships (according to the German official narrative) apparently always having previous information of these attempts. Finally, under compulsion of hunger and lack of coal, the *Cormoran* made for the port of Guam and was interned there on the 14th of December. Her captain did not lose hope. He made himself consistently agreeable to the United States colony at Guam; his officers "entertained at tea" and gave moonlight picnics, and his band "rendered delightful concerts"; the ship was, if the social columns of various American newspapers may be believed, one of the centres of Guam society. So it happened that at the end of October, 1916, the *Cormoran* found herself with full bunkers, a large supply of ammunition, and new breech-blocks for all her guns, ready to escape from

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internment and begin over again as a commerce-raider—when her intentions were unexpectedly betrayed to the United States Government at Washington, and Guam woke up.

Meanwhile the *Prinz Eitel Friedrich,* which on the 16th of September had met the *Komet* at Malakal, had coaled there by means of her own boats for a week, and then sailed to Port Alexis, where she was to meet and coal the *Cormoran.* This vessel, however, had left, and, though her consort repeatedly called her, the only answer was the wireless of English ships "all around us . . . in particular the battle-cruiser *Australia.*" The Dutch authorities also prevented the steamers *Preussen* and *Roon,* which were in port in the Dutch islands, from repeating the *Prinz Eitel Friedrich's* signals, and her attempts to gain touch with the German naval agency in Batavia consequently failed. Her captain therefore decided that he could do no good in Australasian waters; he might keep his freedom for a few months, but after that his coal would be exhausted; and the only field of operations that suggested itself to him was the western coast of South America, where he could rejoin the big cruisers Accordingly the *Prinz Eitel Friedrich* ran for safety as fast as the quality of her coal would let her, caught up the main squadron at Masafuera off Chile on the 26th of October, and was again detached to raid in South American waters on the 17th of November. On the 12th of January she passed into the Atlantic, raided her way up to the equator, and then hastily made for the United States, reaching Newport News on the 10th of March. There, a little later, she was interned.

One's first emotion, after considering the wanderings of the *Cormoran* and *Prinz Eitel Friedrich,* is to be very thankful that all the German cruiser-captains were not of the breed of the *Emden's.* The great difficulty of coal supply must be admitted; and if either vessel had imitated the *Emden,* its career might have ended sooner—but its achievements would have exercised a very deadly influence on Australian opinion. and might even have held up for many months the transport of the A.I.F. to Egypt.

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VI

In the last section it was said that German warships in the Pacific received warning of the possibility of war with England as early as the 11th of July. Their action from that time onward makes it evident that the warning was taken seriously. According to the official German narrative, it was not until the 30th that German merchant shipping (probably the head offices) was warned by Berlin, and wireless warning was sent out to ships in the South Sea on the 1st of August. It is perhaps worth while to consider such evidence as is available to show whether any German residents in the Commonwealth received early notice of the danger.

Apart from the official history, which appears to be sufficiently frank, the main source of information of this kind is the scrutiny of messages that passed between Australian and German firms before the outbreak of war. A large number of messages were in cypher, and few of these have been translated; but the almost certain conclusion from the others is that, up to the 1st day of August, Germany expected England to keep out of the war. Some Germans in Australia held this belief until the night of the 3rd. A distinction seems to have been made between shipping and trading firms. One German shipping firm at least, the German-Australian Steamship Company, got its warning on the afternoon of the 1st; the traders and commercial agents, as far as can be discovered, never received warning of an English war at all, but formed their opinions day by day from the press cablegrams.

A few of the scrutinised messages may be given to illustrate this conclusion. The only direct reference to a warning is contained in the following telegram from the Sydney agents of the German-Australian Steamship Company on the 1st of August to their headquarters in Hamburg:—

> Telegram received. Have ordered *Essen* to Delagoa Bay; *Luneburg* leaves Newcastle this evening by direct route to Makassar, in conformity with your instructions to *Linden*. Is the instruction to *Ulm* valid for immediate departure? Telegraph immediately on receipt.

No trace can be found of the telegram from Hamburg or of the other messages referred to; possibly they were sent to some private and inconspicuous address with an English name. Other evidence shows that the warning must have

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reached the Sydney agents between 4.15 and 5.20 p.m. on the 1st.[48] A message from Hamburg to Sydney, received early on the 2nd, runs: "Settle everything economically."

Among other interesting messages of the 1st are two from the Norddeutsche Bank of Hamburg, withdrawing credits, and one from the Norddeutscher-Lloyd Steamship Company of Bremen to its Sydney agents:—

Discontinue freight and passenger business. Warn agents and sub-agents in Australia.

On the 1st, also, official (mostly mobilisation) and press messages began to pour in, making it quite clear that war with Russia and France either was imminent or had actually begun. Simultaneously private messages besought their receivers to insure cargoes against war risks, or to cancel orders, but in very few cases was the message considered important enough to send at full rates—"deferred" or "week-end" rates were paid in almost all cases. It may also be noted that the German-Australian Steamship Company was not sure that the *Ulm's* departure need be hurried. But it is obvious that one does not openly demand the mobilisation of men, or the insurance against war-risks of cargo, in a country with which one expects immediately to be at war.

Combining this evidence from telegrams with the known facts about the warships, quite apart from the statements of the German official history, it seems reasonable to conclude that the German authorities made ready for war at least as early as the 11th of July, but that—in spite of the warning sent by the German Admiralty on that date—it was generally expected to be a war with Russia, or with Russia and France, only. If war with England had been anticipated, not only would German merchant-vessels have been got away from Australian ports in plenty of time—whereas seven were caught in Port Jackson, two at Brisbane, and one each at Melbourne and

[48] The actual warning message issued by the German Government to its merchant-vessels all over the world was discovered when Nauru was occupied in November. It was forwarded at 7.25 p.m. on the 1st of August from Yap to Nauru, for transmission to Apia and all German vessels and wireless stations within reach:—

"Threatened danger of war. Do not enter any harbour belonging to England, France, or Russia. Admiralty."

Nauru promptly repeated it to the *Planet*, and early next morning to Apia. Within twenty-four hours the order for mobilisation was circulated through the same series of stations; and at midnight on the 2nd orders were issued from Yap to transmit no more private matter, Government messages only being accepted thenceforth.

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Hobart, while three more got away only at the last moment—but the big cruisers would hardly have been kept idling at Ponape, even to wait for the *Nürnberg*. If, on the other hand, Britain intended to remain neutral, it was not worth while to disturb the peaceful current of normal commerce with Australia until the very last moment.[49]

Apart from the evidence of telegrams, certain events earlier in the year go to show that Germany foresaw fighting in the Pacific at an early date. In February, 1914, the German Vice-Consul at Newcastle suddenly woke up to an interest in the coal trade. He had known nothing about it previously; but in that month he purchased on behalf of a Hamburg firm—which also had not previously interested itself in Newcastle coal—three cargoes (about 9,000 tons) of the best steam coal for shipment to Valparaiso. Two of these cargoes were shipped in German vessels, and left Newcastle for the Chilean port in June and July respectively. The third, shipped in a Norwegian vessel, left for the same port after the war began—when, of course, the destination of the coal at the other end was carefully supervised. The same official, a few days before war broke out, formally cleared a German vessel, the *Westfalen*, for Sourabaya, but secretly directed her master to make direct for Valparaiso at full speed.[50]

Again, the steamer *Pommern*, which left Germany on the 13th of May, 1914, had in its cargo several cases described as "merchandise" and consigned to a German agent in Sydney. At Sydney this stuff was re-consigned to the Government officials at Nauru, transhipped without trouble on the 21st of July, and very nearly reached its consignees. But it so happened that at the outbreak of war the vessel carrying it had just got to Ocean Island, and was detained there; and examination of the cargo showed that the "merchandise" was in reality Mauser ammunition. Though

[49] It is possible that the cypher messages already mentioned—which proved uninterpretable—contained secret warnings of the coming catastrophe. But if so we must assume that the German agents in Australia were practising an almost incredibly clever system of "faking" their business transactions; for the whole series of messages in plain language or recognised codes (most of them to or from the agents connected with Krupp's, the big metal companies, or the big shipping companies) betrays no symptom of disturbance beyond what has been described above, and the actual current of commerce was quite normal until the 1st of August (in most cases until the 3rd). Moreover, the German vessels in port were not got away, and those *en route* to Australia were not warned.

[50] A good deal of the coal that left Newcastle in July eventually reached German vessels.

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this was the only consignment seized, it is probable that others got through, thus keeping the German colonies well and secretly supplied with ammunition.

The detention and examination of enemy and suspected vessels is more properly dealt with in a later chapter, but a few details of the seizures effected and discoveries made at the beginning of the war may fitly be introduced here. The *Pommern* (a North German Lloyd vessel) left Brisbane for Sydney on the 1st of August, and late in the evening of the 2nd her Sydney agents made a hasty attempt to warn her:—

Turn back at once and make for any port in Java.

Though this message was stopped by the censor, it seems that the *Pommern* intercepted the official warning already mentioned,[51] for on the 3rd she wirelessed the following message to Sydney:—

Steamer off to Valparaiso; have not coal enough, so am burning copra. Want immediate answer.

It would appear that even the copra supply gave out, for she was next heard of at Honolulu, where on the 1st of September her crew helped to coal the *Nürnberg,* the *Pommern* herself remaining in shelter during the war.

Two vessels left Sydney hurriedly (at any rate, without getting all their cargo and passengers aboard) on the 3rd and 4th of August respectively; on the latter day one cleared from Fremantle. Early in the morning of the 5th the *Pfalz* slipped out of Port Melbourne, but could not reach the Heads before the Declaration of War was made known; she was signalled and a shot was fired across her bows; after an altercation between the Australian pilot and her captain, she stopped, and was taken back to Hobson's Bay under an armed guard.[52] Seven vessels were detained in Port Jackson, two in Brisbane, and one in Hobart. But this was far from being the total catch. The three vessels that had escaped remained for two or three weeks in Australian waters, and used their wireless plant to warn other German vessels that war had broken out; but in spite of their efforts thirteen others entered Australian harbours after war began, and were interned accordingly. Five of these ran into Port Phillip

[51] *See footnote on p. 43.*
[52] The pilot's account of this incident is given in *Appendix No. 11.*

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between the 11th of August and the 3rd of September; the rest came to Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide, and Fremantle, the last—a sailing-ship—running into the trap as late as the 11th of November.

It may be noted that, of the twenty-four vessels enumerated above as detained or captured, nine belonged to the German-Australian Company, which, as we know, was warned on the 1st of August. The other big German shipping company, the North German Lloyd, lost six. Of the four (including the *Pommern*) that got away only one was a German-Australian vessel; the other three belonged to the North German Lloyd.

The steamer *Hobart*, caught as she entered Port Phillip,[53] contained valuable booty. In her were found not only the semi-official *Instructions to Shipping as to Their Conduct in a Naval War* issued by the Hamburg Ship-owners' Union, with their *Secret Appendix*,[54] but also a key to the code cypher used by German warships in communicating with German merchant vessels. This proved of great importance; messages intercepted by African and South American stations, as well as by British warships, were for some time transmitted to the Navy Office to be decyphered; and when early in November the German authorities apparently discovered that their cypher was known, and substituted another, this also (as well as a third introduced about the middle of November) was decyphered by the strenuous and excellent work of Dr. F. W. Wheatley.[55] Among the messages thus transmitted to the Navy Office[56] was one that had been intercepted at Cape Town from the German station at Windhoek in German South-West Africa:—

With my authority a free corps composed of Boers and Germans under Andries de Wet are marching, together with a commando of rebel Boers, on Upington. I have promised the rebels recognition by the Imperial Government as a war-waging Power; recognition of independence contingent on (the formation of a) future Boer Free State. . . .

[53] For an account of the very clever capture both of the ship and of her secret documents, *see p. 381.*

[54] For these *see Appendix No. 10.*

[55] Dr. F. W. Wheatley, C.B.E. Senior Naval Instructor, 1915/19, and Headmaster, 1920/31, of R.A.N. College; of Sydney; b. Kapunda, S. Aust., 7 June, 1871.

[56] Among these were several stating that the German Pacific Squadron proposed to proceed to the Atlantic, had arranged a rendezvous with the *Eleonore Woermann* near Abrolhos Rocks off Brazil, and was then going to West Africa. This information possibly assisted the Admiralty in its task of deciding where to direct reinforcements after Coronel.

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CHAPTER II

CAPTURE OF THE GERMAN COLONIES: SAMOA, NAURU

DURING the first phase of the naval operations the Australian Squadron had been employed on the orthodox business of fleets in war-time—searching for the enemy squadron, with the intention of bringing it to action, and, if possible, destroying it. Other business was now to be thrust upon it.

On the 6th of August the British Government telegraphed the following suggestion to the Australian Government:—

> If your Ministers desire and feel themselves able to seize German wireless stations at Yap in Marshall Islands, Nauru on[1] Pleasant Island, and New Guinea, we should feel that this was a great and urgent Imperial service. You will, however, realise that any territory now occupied must be at the disposal of the Imperial Government for purposes of an ultimate settlement at conclusion of the war. Other Dominions are acting in similar way on the same understanding, in particular, suggestion is being made to New Zealand in regard to Samoa.

It is now known that this proposal emanated from a sub-committee constituted on the 4th of August by the Committee of Imperial Defence, in order to consider combined naval and military operations against enemy territory. There is some evidence that the sub-committee may have assumed that, before the proposed expeditions sailed, the German Pacific Squadron would have been accounted for. When once, however, the proposals had been promulgated, that all-important condition was submerged, and the proposed expeditions appear to have been regarded for the time being as the primary measures of British strategy in the South Pacific.

Now in the informal debates and discussions which accompanied the birth of the Australian Navy, one of the most frequent taunts used by opponents of the scheme was: "Australians do not know what a navy is wanted for. When war comes they will either keep their ships hanging round their coasts, or will want to run about the Pacific occupying enemy territory. What they have to learn is that the one use of a navy is to destroy the enemy navy, and the first thing a squadron must do in war-time is to hunt down

[1] This is the official version. Another version gives "or" for "on." But both put Yap in the Marshalls.

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the enemy squadron wherever it is. When the enemy's ships are smashed, there will be plenty of time to occupy enemy country." Being a little more intelligent than these scorners would believe, Australians learnt the lesson thus crudely conveyed, and began to put it into practice the minute war was declared. It was therefore somewhat surprising for them to be asked, before the war was three days old, to use their ships for exactly the purpose against which all their previous advisers had warned them. The reason for the adoption of this course has never been altogether clear, and it was quite unexpected at this stage by the Australian Government and people. For complying with it, indeed, the Ministers of the day were (very unjustly) suspected of petty intrigues and unworthy aims; when they were cleared, the suspicions were automatically transferred to the Government of New Zealand, mainly because that Government's expedition was the first to start. These rumours and charges of the past would not be worth mention here for their own sake; they are recalled in order to emphasize the point that few thoughtful Australians suspected the British Government and the British Admiralty of having called the Australian Squadron from its proper task, and set it to work which the Commonwealth had been taught to believe utterly wrong in principle. It is obvious that the occupation of Rabaul, Apia, etc., was useful, because it left the *Cormoran* and *Prinz Eitel Friedrich* without bases. But some Australians are still of opinion that the early destruction of the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* would have more than compensated for a few extra weeks' shelter for the smaller enemy cruisers.[2]

[2] An unfortunate misstatement is made in the British official *History of Naval Operations* (*Vol. I, p. 294*), from which it has been repeated in the German official history (*Der Krieg Zur See—Kreuzerkrieg, Vol. I, p. 167*). "Open complaints were heard of the management of the Australian Fleet and regrets that the two Dominions had not kept the control in their own hands. Then, at least, they would have had their splendid contributions to the Navy—the *Australia* and *New Zealand* —to guard their own men." The German history goes on (*p. 191*) to point to the possibility that the destruction of the British squadron off Coronel may have resulted from interference by the dominions with the Admiralty's discretion concerning the movements of the *Australia*. It cannot, therefore, be too strongly stated that the statement quoted above, so far as it concerns Australia, is quite unjustified. No complaints of the kind were ever heard in Australia, where no one ever wished to tie the *Australia* down to convoy escort, even of the Commonwealth's own troops to Egypt. But there were complaints and regrets that the *Australia* and the other cruisers had been tied down to convoying duties at all, instead of being allowed, as the local authorities would have allowed them, to hunt down enemy warships.

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The Commonwealth authorities replied at once (on the 7th) that they would willingly render the required service, "provided that the German fleet is considered the first objective," and on the 8th the then Minister for Defence (Senator Millen) drew up a minute:—

It is manifestly undesirable to divert any of the warships from their present mission for the purpose indicated in the cable. The object sought might, however, be attained by despatch of an armed merchantman carrying a sufficient complement of men.

Adding the proviso that the more powerful cruisers of the enemy should first be accounted for, the Naval Board concurred in this view; and on the 10th the following message went to London:—

Expeditionary force of 1,500 men being organized by Government for action suggested in your telegram 6th August. Despatching in merchant cruiser carrying four 4.7 guns. Departure subject to reports from Patey.

While Australia's reply of the 7th was still on its way, the High Commissioner sent another call to action—

Military authorities hope to hear shortly of Australian activity dealing with German possessions Pacific Ocean.

and on the 9th the Admiralty put in a message for transmission to Admiral Patey:—

Military expedition in two transports leaves New Zealand about 11th inst. for Apia. Senior naval officer New Zealand has been ordered to arrange for escort of at least one cruiser. You will be informed later of actual departure of expedition. Guard against interference by enemy.

No one knew where the big German cruisers were.[3] They had had time to go anywhere and to hide anywhere; they might be near Rabaul (this was, it must be remembered, before the raid of the 11th), or near Samoa, or cruising between New Zealand and the Fiji group. Before the Australian Squadron could obtain a jot of information about them, somebody in London was pressing the Pacific Dominions to send off little expeditions into unsearched and dangerous waters, in order to occupy as a matter of urgency an island

[3] There is evidence to show that Admiralty officials thought they were still in Chinese waters. The Imperial Defence sub-committee's original memorandum regarding the proposed raid on Yap says, "Naval escort two cruisers *Encounter* and *Sydney* would be suitable provided the German armoured cruisers in China are accounted for." It is difficult, however, to understand how the *Encounter* and *Sydney* could have usefully acted together. (Note.—Only extracts from Admiral Jackson's memorandum are available in Australia, and these differ slightly in various copies.)

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here and an island there—the whole and only importance of those islands being their possible use as naval bases, of a very imperfect kind, by the cruisers for which our fleet was looking. Those cruisers once destroyed, the islands could be taken or let alone as might seem best and most convenient; their importance would be gone.

In this connection it is to be noted that the sub-committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence was not at the time at all satisfied with the manner in which its proposals were being put into practice. Its chairman, Admiral Sir H. B. Jackson, on the 24th of August in a memorandum concerning troop movements in the Indian and Pacific Oceans, written "to meet the dispositions proposed by the First Lord," said:—

> "If these waters were known to be clear of enemy cruisers, the situation would be very different, and I would point out that the duties that occupy and foreshadow the movements of our Eastern squadron are hardly those laid down in Standing War Orders, where the destruction of the enemy warships is the first and principal duty. It is noteworthy that these have not been encountered or seriously looked for; and we seem to be asking too much from the limited force we have in those waters, and are looking ahead and planning our military expeditions without taking sufficient thought of our enemy's naval forces.
>
> "The *Gneisenau* and *Scharnhorst* may not be the only ones in the Pacific; apparently the little *Geier* is active in interrupting our communications, and it is high time we destroyed the German communications and armed vessels of all descriptions in these waters."

At any rate, the effect of these demands on the plans of Admiral Patey was destructive, and must be considered in some detail in order to refute charges of immobility, delay, and the like which have been brought against him. The Admiralty's message of the 9th did not reach him till the evening of the 14th. Meanwhile during the night of the 12th-13th he received from the Governor-General of New

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Zealand a message saying that an expedition was in preparation, and asking whether it could be safely sent off. To this he replied:—

> I do not consider it safe at present for expedition to start without escort. I have not received any order about it yet.

At the moment the *Australia* was searching the area round Bougainville, and must return to a base to complete with fuel; the admiral, however, did not imagine that after his warning any troops would leave New Zealand until he was ready to support them, and accordingly proceeded to develop his plans on his way back to Port Moresby. He had already come to the conclusion that the big German cruisers were some distance away to the north or east, probably on their way to America, so that a visit to Samoa was quite on the cards; it was therefore well within his duty to move towards Samoa, and he planned to cover the New Zealand transports with the *Australia* and *Melbourne,* leaving the *Sydney, Encounter,* and destroyers to guard against possible but unlikely attacks from the north or north-west.[4] The *Sydney,* in particular, was to revisit Rabaul and persevere till the wireless station there was found and destroyed.

Day by day these plans received slight alterations. A message from the admiral commanding in China, to the effect that the French cruiser *Montcalm* had been ordered to that station, led to a decision to take the *Sydney* to Samoa also, especially as it had been proposed[5] to bring the *Minotaur* and *Yarmouth* into Australian waters directly Japan declared war (an event expected on the 12th, though it was postponed). The three Australian ships were to leave Port Moresby on the 19th, coal at Noumea, and meet the New Zealand transports

[4] Patey afterwards wrote that, upon consideration he "came to the conclusion that an expedition to take Samoa was a very desirable operation if covered by the Fleet." On the strength of this an attempt—surely quite unjustified—has been made to attribute to him a share in the responsibility for launching the expedition at this early stage. Whatever he may have thought of it afterwards, the fact is that the proposal entirely frustrated his own intention and that of the Australian Government, which had urged upon the British Government that the German fleet should be "the first objective." [After reading this footnote in the 1st edition of this work, Admiral Patey stated that the meaning of the words quoted was that "by this means I might have had an opportunity of bringing Admiral von Spee to action, as I felt sure he would be in the vicinity, and I thought that, once I had got so far to the east, I might have been left free to deal with the German squadron in my own way. . . . . I should have been waiting for him (von Spee) outside Samoan waters, and not at anchor, as he seemed to expect."]

[5] *See pp. 18-19.*

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on the 26th at a rendezvous about 600 miles north of New Zealand. These dates were almost immediately altered to the 17th and 24th—apparently because on the 14th, for the first time, Admiral Patey heard that the expedition had been timed to leave on the 11th. On the 15th, however, he received from the Admiralty, through the Naval Board, information that the expedition had started:—

Following telegram received from Admiralty. Message begins: For Rear-Admiral, *Australia*. New Zealand expedition for the capture of Samoa due at Suva 20th August under escort *Montcalm* and two "P" class.[6] 3,000 tons coal ordered Samoa. Possible *Gneisenau* and *Scharnhorst* may be there. Proceed with *Australia* to support expedition, arranging coal board ship convenient to reach Suva 20th August. If late, *Australia* to follow expedition to Samoa, using *Encounter, Melbourne, Sydney* for New Guinea expedition and, if possible, destruction of wireless at Nauru. They will be required later for convoy of Australian troops to Aden. Yap will be dealt with by China Squadron. Message ends.

It will be noted that the original suggestion to seize German wireless stations had now developed into one for a full-blown occupation of the principal German islands. This was no doubt desired partly for strategical reasons—to deny these bases to the German fleet, and make them available for the British—but it seems probable that a political motive was also largely responsible. It has long been known that a good many high officials in London, neglecting Lord Kitchener's hint that the war might last at least three years, were convinced that it would be over by Christmas —not necessarily ending with a disastrous defeat of Germany, but pursuing a course that would convince the German Government of its folly in starting hostilities, and so might lead to peace negotiations. In that case, it may well have seemed to them both wise and of urgent importance that we should have in hand some German territory for bargaining purposes, possibly to exchange for Belgium. It is not easy to see how such a belief could justify the despatch of transports and small cruisers (perhaps ahead of their escort—"if late," the telegram says) into an area possibly containing the two big German cruisers; but it offers some sort of explanation for a course of action that in any case is difficult to understand.

[6] *i.e.* the *Psyche* and *Philomel*. The *Pyramus* was also sent.

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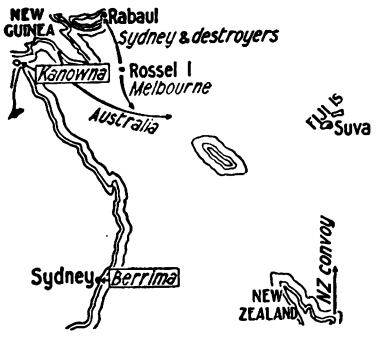
However that may be, the expedition to Samoa was on its way, and all Admiral Patey could do was to get it halted till he could accompany it:—

I could meet expedition off Suva 24th August.

But at least he might be able to stop the Australian expedition from running similar risks:—

I do not consider it advisable for Australian expedition to start for New Guinea without escort *Australia*, so long as *Scharnhorst Gneisenau* are not accounted for or definitely located. In view of this *Melbourne Sydney* should accompany *Australia* to Samoa, and afterwards all return to carry out New Guinea expedition. . . . *Australia* will proceed alone if not approved. Please ask Admiralty to reply at once.

The suggested plan at this moment was (*a*) to take the *Australia* and the *Melbourne* to Suva as quickly as possible in order to catch up the New Zealand convoy; (*b*) to keep the Australian transports (of which one, the *Kanowna* was at Thursday Island; the other, the *Berrima*, at Sydney) in port until the *Australia* could get back; (*c*) to send the *Sydney*—which, as soon as it was known that the *Montcalm* would be available for the convoy, was once more free—with the destroyers first to Rabaul, then to search Friedrich Wilhelm Harbour on the mainland of New Guinea.



On the 15th of August, in passing Admiral Patey's telegram on to the Admiralty, the Naval Board suggested—

As Australian expedition ready to leave for Thursday Island immediately and Australian fleet is at Port Moresby, Government ask your consideration (as to the) practicability (of) *Australia* convoying Australian expedition first, then proceeding with Samoa expedition. Very short time necessary to carry out New Guinea expedition, while other course will involve delay of fully a month. The (Australian) Government's proposal on the other hand will, while securing New Guinea, only delay Samoa enterprise a few days.

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The Admiralty, however, on the 11th—before learning that the Australian expedition was ready—had given leave for the New Zealand expedition to start, which it did early on the morning of the 15th. Though the Australian suggestion was reasonable, it was then too late to entertain it;[7] but, as the Australian Government appeared anxious to avoid delay, the Admiralty put forward a new proposal by which this might be lessened. The new plan was explained in a telegram which the Naval Board on the 16th passed on to Admiral Patey as follows:—

Following telegram received from Admiralty. Begins: New Zealand expedition having started must be covered by *Australia*, as the two German cruisers' whereabouts unknown. Proposed that *Melbourne* and *Sydney* should convoy New Guinea expedition northwards inside the Barrier Reef, to be subsequently joined at a suitable base by *Australia* and *Montcalm*. Ends.

The Australian Government adopted this suggestion, and informed Admiral Patey—

500 men now leaving Thursday Island for Port Moresby by *Kanowna*, unless you countermand direct to officer commanding garrison at Thursday Island. . . . Expedition from Sydney will leave Wednesday 19th August for Thursday Island by *Berrima* inside the Great Barrier Reef.

It appears, then, that the Admiralty had now noted the danger into which the New Zealand expedition had been originally sent. But these negotiations had undoubtedly placed Admiral Patey in a difficult position. Just as the New Zealand expedition had been sent to sea without consulting the admiral in command in Australian waters, so now the Australian expedition was hurried out of Port Jackson without consulting him, and his cruisers were taken out of his hands and allotted to convoy duty. Patey's own opinion is not in doubt; he wrote it down at the time:—

I did not think that the New Zealand expedition would have started before I was ready to meet it, nor did I contemplate that the Australian expedition for New Guinea would start till after the New Zealand expedition had safely landed. I now found myself with two expeditions to convoy, and therefore had to relinquish all other operations. . . .

If the New Zealand expedition had delayed their start for three days, I could have met them at a pre-arranged rendezvous between

[7] Had the course suggested by the Commonwealth Government been followed, the *Australia* with the New Zealand expedition would probably have arrived at Samoa about the time of the German squadron's visit.

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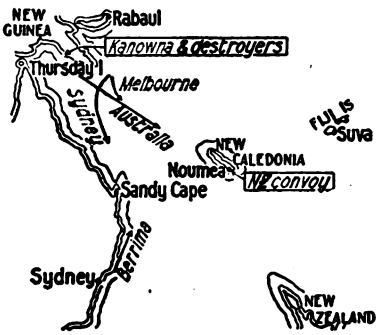
New Zealand and Suva, and thus avoided the necessity of the expedition coming considerably out of their way to Noumea; no time would really have been lost in the end, and coal would have been saved.



Accordingly the whole plan of operations was altered in a few hours. Rabaul was left to its own devices; luckily no great harm ensued. The *Australia* and *Melbourne* went off to Noumea to take up the New Zealand convoy. The *Sydney* left Rossel Island on the 18th and proceeded south to meet the *Berrima* off Sandy Cape, the *Encounter* from Port Moresby following at her slower speed. The destroyers were sent to Port Moresby to keep guard over the *Kanowna*. Except for the chance of meeting the German cruisers near Samoa, the whole squadron was deliberately diverted from its proper objective and set to guard expeditions which, in the opinion both of Admiral Patey and of the Australian Government, were of less importance than the task—still unfulfilled—of searching for the German fleet.

II

As the operations now to be considered were concerned with the German colonies in the Pacific, it will be advisable to preface this narrative of them with a short account of those colonies.

During the seventies of last century the Hamburg firm of Godeffroy and Son began to spread their trading stations, hitherto centred in Samoa, over the Marshalls and the Bismarck Archipelago, where they were soon joined by the firm of Hernsheim, which also began to trade in the Carolines and the Gilberts. When the German Empire found itself

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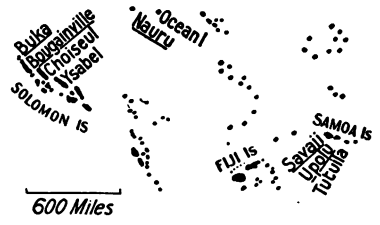
in a position to add colonies to its other Imperial trappings, these island groups naturally came under review; an attempt to annex Samoa in 1882 was frustrated by the Reichstag, but towards the end of 1884 the German flag was hoisted at various harbours in the Bismarcks and New Guinea, and within a few months the Marshalls—then no one's property—were added to the new acquisitions. An attempt was also made to grab at the Carolines and Mariannes, which were (nominally, at least) owned by Spain. In 1888 Nauru was annexed and attached to the Marshalls; in 1899 Spain, then suffering under her defeat by the United States, was persuaded to sell the Mariannes (except Guam), Pelews, and Carolines; in 1900 the two larger of the Samoan Islands were taken over, the United States getting the third, and Britain receiving as compensation two of the western Solomons (Choiseul and Ysabel), which had been German since 1886. The two Solomon Islands farther west — Bougainville and Buka—remained German.



German Islands are underlined

After several experiments in forms of administration, the settled arrangement at the outbreak of war was as follows: Samoa formed a separate colony under its own Governor; all the other groups—Marshalls, Carolines, Pelews, New Guinea mainland, and Bismarcks (with two Solomons attached)—were under the Governor of "German New Guinea" (a term which officially included them all), with headquarters at Rabaul in New Britain. Saipan in the Mariannes, Ponape, Yap, and Friedrich Wilhelm Harbour (now Madang) in New Guinea were the principal district headquarters. There were minor Government stations at Jabor in Jaluit, Kuror in the Pelews, Truk, Käwieng in New Ireland, Nauru, Manus in the Admiralty group, Kieta

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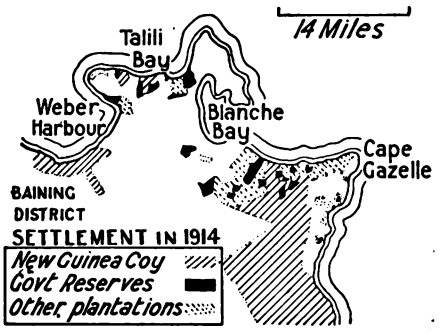
on Bougainville, and Eitape and Morobe on the New Guinea mainland. The areas and populations were estimated roughly as given in the table below:—

	Land Area. Sq. miles.	Population. Native.	White.
Samoa	995 ..	37,000 ..	500
Bismarcks	18,000 ..	190,000 ..	700
Solomons	3,850 ..	60,000 ..	100
New Guinea mainland ..	70,000 ..	110,000 ..	300
Mariannes	250 ..	4,500 ..	50
Carolines, Pelews ..	560 ..	42,000 ..	250
Marshalls	150 ..	10,000 ..	170
Nauru	8 ..	1,400 ..	100

As may be gathered from the above figures, the white settlement was confined to trading-stations and a few plantations. No island of any size had been properly explored except along the coast-line. The German plan of settlement, especially in the Bismarcks, was to edge the coast-line with good roads made by native labour, occasionally to push plantations a little way in from these roads, and for the rest to let the native tribes govern themselves so long as inter-tribal fighting was kept down, and a small poll-tax was collected by the local head-men, who were enrolled as Government officials. Great efforts were made to attract planters and capital from outside, although the main business was kept carefully in the hands of German trading companies — the Jaluit Company, the New Guinea Company, Forsayth's, Hernsheim's. Similarly the shipping of island products was almost entirely done by vessels of the North German Lloyd, the German-Australian Company, or the Jaluit Company. A few Australian planters had been attracted to New Britain, and one or two Australian firms were experimenting in Bougainville.



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As far as can be ascertained, no fortifications of any kind had been constructed in any of the groups, though there was undoubtedly a strategic plan behind the road-construction, and coaling-sheds, wharves, &c., had been made at certain stations on a scale out of all proportion to existing or prospective trade demands. Much effort had been spent on exploration and investigation of a scientific character. By 1910—less than thirty years after the first annexation—it was possible for German publishers to put forth books containing elaborate details of the ethnology, coastal botany and zoology, meteorology and hydrography of all the Pacific colonies, together with a list of nearly 350 important works on those subjects already compiled.

Apart from these general facts, very little was known about the enemy colonies at the outbreak of war. The German policy of restricting trade—contrary to the whole spirit of the agreements with Britain under which nearly all these colonies had been acquired—was successful in depriving outsiders of any accurate knowledge of the situation within the groups, as may be easily seen from articles written about them even within recent years. In August, 1914, rumours of secret fortifications, of huge concealed stores of coal, even of elaborate electrical contrivances for harbour defence, were widely circulated; and British and Australian authorities, while they placed little trust in these rumours, were nevertheless compelled to take precautions against the possibility of their being correct. A simple instance, both of lack of knowledge and of the unnecessary trouble which it eventually cost, is the search for the wireless station in New Britain. It was known that it was being constructed. There was excellent evidence that it was not ready at the end of June, and that it would probably not be completed for many months to come. But its position was a mystery, and, when someone who really knew it was discovered, the authorities hesitated about believing him; he might, like so many others at that time, be pretending to greater accuracy than his actual knowledge justified. The fact that the German Governor had a second station of a temporary character attached to his vagrant headquarters increased the puzzle, inasmuch as references to this station were naturally supposed

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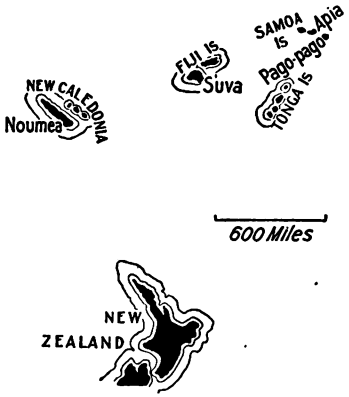
to be connected with the main installation at Bitapaka. It may, indeed, almost be said that the German colonies had two lines of defence—the one their squadron, the other their unknownness; and while, with the German squadron out of the way, there should have been plenty of time to feel a way into these unknown regions, as long as that squadron was in being, and might be within reach, every day was of importance. Troops cannot be sent two thousand miles to feel their way about in tropical bush, while two enemy cruisers are possibly on their heels. When once it is known that the enemy cruisers are destroyed or driven across the ocean. such troops may take their time.

III

Early on the 17th of August the *Australia* left Port Moresby for Noumea, being joined by the *Melbourne* from Rossel Island on the 20th. Noumea was reached next day, and the New Zealand transports were found there; so, too, was the French cruiser *Montcalm*,[8] flying the flag of Rear-Admiral Huguet. The expedition now consisted of two transports (*Moeraki* and *Monowai*), three cruisers (two Australian and one French), and the three small British cruisers (*Psyche, Philomel, Pyramus*) which had escorted the troops from New Zealand.[9] A glance at the map will show how far out of their way these vessels had been forced to come.



[8] At the outbreak of war the *Montcalm* (according to *La Guerre des Croiseurs* by *Paul Chack, Capitaine de Frégate*) was returning through the South Sea after a cruise to South America. It was originally intended that she should visit Samoa on the 5th of August, but she was behind her time, and had just left Raiaitea in the Society Islands when, on the night of the 4th, she picked up a wireless message from Honolulu giving vague news of the strained situation in Europe. Admiral Huguet accordingly headed for Fiji. On the 6th he heard that Germany and England were at war, but not until the 8th that France was involved. On reaching Suva on the 12th he received from his Government orders to join the British China Squadron, and was proceeding to Hong Kong *viâ* Noumea when he was recalled and instructed to wait at Suva for the Samoa expedition. Hearing, however, that the German squadron was off New Guinea, he decided to meet the Australian Squadron at Noumea.

[9] These troops were an infantry battalion, an engineer company, and medical and army service corps details, with 2 15-pounder guns, 2 6-pounders, and 4 Maxims. They totalled 1,383 men.

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The rumour that the two big enemy cruisers might be near Samoa had been repeated from the Admiralty just as Admiral Patey reached Noumea. He therefore drew out the order of sailing with great care; the *Psyche* was to go eight miles ahead by day (two by night), the rest following in two columns a mile apart, one headed by the *Montcalm,* the other by the *Australia.* The *Montcalm,* being the slowest of the big ships, set the pace, which was usually twelve knots. In case of attack, the *Australia* was to lead towards the enemy, followed by *Montcalm* and *Melbourne;* the convoy, in charge of the three small cruisers, was to make for safety.

Owing to the grounding of the *Monowai* on a bank in the harbour, the expedition did not leave Noumea till the 23rd, and reached Suva on the 26th. There they got the news of Japan's entry into the war. Fifteen Samoans, representatives of all the important villages in German Samoa, were also taken aboard, with the intention of sending them to their homes as soon as the colony had been captured, so that they might explain to their friends exactly what the British proposed to do. Sailing again on the 27th, the expedition found itself off Apia about 7.45 a.m. on the 30th, and the pre-arranged programme of capture was carried out. The *Psyche* was sent in towards the harbour, flying a flag of truce; two picket-boats from the *Australia* accompanied her, and proceeded to sweep the channel for mines, a course which would obviously not have been adopted had any enemy warships been seen in the harbour. Then the *Psyche's* steam-boat, flying her colours and a flag of truce, made inshore with an officer carrying Admiral Patey's demand for the surrender of the colony and the immediate cessation of wireless operations. Half-an-hour was allowed for an answer, but none was forthcoming for some time afterwards. About 10.15 an official who announced himself as acting-governor gave his word that no resistance would be offered, and that no mines had been laid in the harbour; the wireless calls, which had been frequent and urgent when the fleet was first sighted, had ceased. At noon Admiral Patey received from the acting-governor a letter protesting against the

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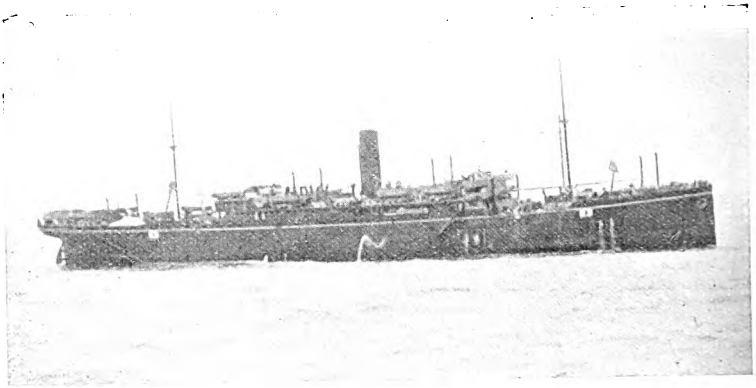
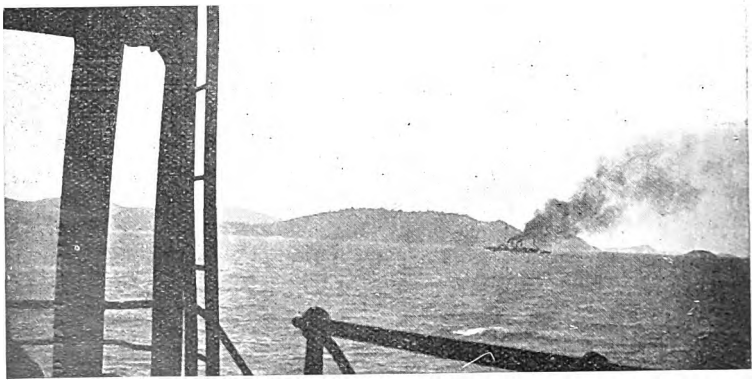


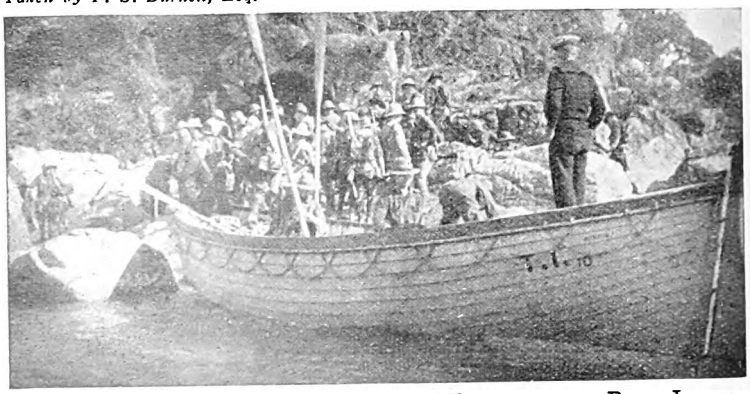
THE *Berrima* ON HER WAY TO RABAUL

Lent by Stoker C. H. G. Maxwell, R.A.N. Aust. War Memorial Collection No. A2221.



OFF PALM ISLAND, AUGUST 1914
H.M.A.S. *Sydney* in the distance.

Taken by F. S. Burnell, Esq.



MEN OF THE 1ST BATTALION, A.N. & M.E.F., LANDING AT PALM ISLAND FOR TRAINING

Taken by Capt. B. C. A. Pockley, A.A.M.C.

To face p. 61.

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admiral's alleged intention of bombarding Apia,[10] and stating that orders had been given to discontinue the use of wireless plant and refrain from resistance. "I leave it to Your Excellency," added Herr Rimburg, "to take possession of the Protectorate of Samoa, and only beg to observe that Your Excellency must also take over the responsibility for the life and property of the European population."

The acting-governor's verbal assurances had, of course, been signalled by the *Psyche* to the *Australia* long before this, and at 11.30 the two transports entered the harbour and began to disembark their troops. At 1 p.m. the Union Jack was hoisted on shore, and the German flag over the Governor's house was lowered shortly afterwards. The landing was completed in good time; the transports lay in a heavy swell, and the only craft available to tow in the laden boats were a few small motor-launches, but the 1,400 men were all ashore by 2.30. Then came the turn of the guns and stores, which were landed, and the transports finally cleared, by noon on the following day—an operation which in the admiral's opinion reflected great credit on the responsible officers. At night the *Australia, Montcalm,* and *Melbourne* to avoid being surprised stood out to sea and cruised at slow speed, returning in the morning.[11]

At 8 a.m. on the 31st the Union Jack was formally hoisted over the courthouse of Apia, and saluted with twenty-one guns from the *Psyche.* At noon the New Zealanders were left to themselves, and the *Montcalm, Australia,* and *Melbourne* hastened back to Suva. Much as the admiral might have wished to stay in Samoan waters—where he expected to find the German cruisers, and where he would have found them a fortnight later—he was no longer his own master; the Australian convoy was awaiting him off the Queensland coast, and its passage to Rabaul must be guarded at the earliest possible moment.[12]

[10] No threat of general bombardment had been made (*see* Admiral Patey's letter in *Appendix No. 29*).

[11] In the first and second editions of *Volume XII,* plate 14 is wrongly described as showing the squadron in harbour at Apia. The photograph was taken at Suva six weeks later.

[12] Admiral Jerram on the 24th of August telegraphed to the Admiralty his opinion: "I consider that Marshall Islands should be examined by Australian Squadron after they coal at Fiji Islands and before escorting expedition to Rabaul. . . ." By order of the Admiralty, however, Patey had to return to escort the expedition which, in accordance with the Admiralty's own proposal, had already sailed. Commandant

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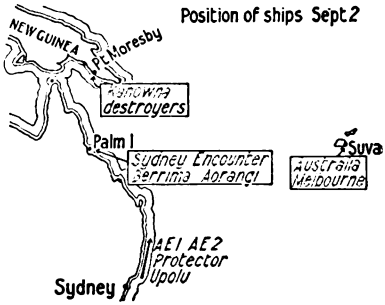
Once established on shore, the New Zealanders determined to hold the islands without naval help. The *Philomel* was detached to visit Pago-pago in Tutuila (the island belonging to the United States), to give the Administrator there formal news of the British occupation. The *Psyche* and *Moeraki* went off to the Tonga Islands on a similar errand. The *Pyramus* and *Monowai* followed the big cruisers to Suva; and when the *Pyramus* on the 3rd of September handed over to the Governor of Fiji her five prisoners—the German Governor and his secretary, the commandant in charge of the wireless station, and a couple of others—the capture of Samoa could be considered complete.



On the 2nd, at the close of this period of operations, the Australian warships were disposed as follows:—

At Suva: *Australia* and *Melbourne.*

At Port Moresby: three destroyers and transport *Kanowna.*

At Palm Island (a little north of Townsville): *Sydney, Encounter,* transport *Berrima,* supply-ship *Aorangi.*

On way to Palm Island from Sydney: two submarines, with *Protector* and *Upolu* as tenders.

At Suva the *Montcalm* left the squadron for Noumea, in pursuance of her previous orders to join the China Squadron. Her assistance in Australian waters, however, was valuable, and upon the request of the British Admiralty

Chack (*La Guerre des Croiseurs*) is, therefore, in error in saying that the reason for Patey's return was to satisfy Australian opinion. Admiral Huguet in a despatch (of the 13th of October) to his Government refers to his own insistence, in a later conference with Patey, upon the mistake of having wasted time over secondary objects such as the Samoa expedition instead of searching for the German fleet. Patey, he surmises was hampered by the Admiralty, which had its eyes upon public opinion in Australia. This is probably a reference to the anxiety exhibited, especially in New Zealand, concerning the safety of the contingent destined for Europe (*see ch. vi*)—a very different matter. Australian opinion was neither responsible for the New Guinea enterprise, nor concerned in hastening it, and the Australian Government had asked that it should not be allowed to interfere with the first duty of the squadron—to find the German fleet.

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this order was modified to allow her to cooperate with Admiral Patey so long as her presence was needed.[13]

IV

While the Samoan expedition was in progress, fresh arrangements were being devised in London for the work to be done in the Pacific. A telegram received in Melbourne on the 19th of August directed that "when Rear-Admiral considers the local naval situation will admit," Rabaul should be occupied by the Australian expedition, and three minor expeditions then detached from it to seize and occupy Nauru, Yap, and Angaur. A later message (1st of September) added the task of escorting the Australian expeditionary force to Aden. The big German cruisers, it must be remembered, were still at large and unlocated. In reply the Admiral

suggested for your consideration that this (the escort to Aden) cannot be done simultaneously with occupation of Angaur, Yap, Nauru, owing to lack of ships. Still, would suggest that China Fleet might join up and carry out a combined sweep through Caroline Islands and Marshall Islands, in which case ships might be spared for escort for the troops to Aden.

The Admiralty's answer (which Admiral Patey did not receive till the 9th of September) was to insist that the *Sydney* and *Melbourne* must be in Port Jackson by the 22nd of September, ready to take up escort duty; Nauru might be dealt with by the *Melbourne* on the way; "further details can be arranged after seizure of Simpsonhafen by remainder of your force." By the "remainder of the force" were meant the *Australia, Encounter, Protector,* destroyers, and submarines—quite enough to capture Rabaul, but hardly sufficing for the detachment of expeditions to occupy Yap and Angaur as well.[14]

Admiral Patey's proposal for a combined sweep of the China and Australian Squadrons was also made directly to Admiral Jerram. But he, though suspecting that the

[13] At Noumea Admiral Huguet was asked to re-arm and re-commission the despatch boat *Kersaint*, whose guns had been placed ashore, and send her to the New Hebrides. This, however, he refused to do, on the ground that the Germans might attempt a landing at Noumea. At a later date the *Kersaint* was re-armed and cruised in the islands.

[14] At this stage the Admiralty already suspected that the German squadron might be on its way to South America, and had, on the 5th of September, warned Admiral Cradock who, telegraphing from Pernambuco, had asked for information as to its whereabouts. In an Admiralty appreciation dated the 7th, the possibility of reinforcing Cradock with the *Australia* was considered, but it was pointed out that she could not reach him until the 15th of October, whereas he could be reinforced from England in about twenty days.

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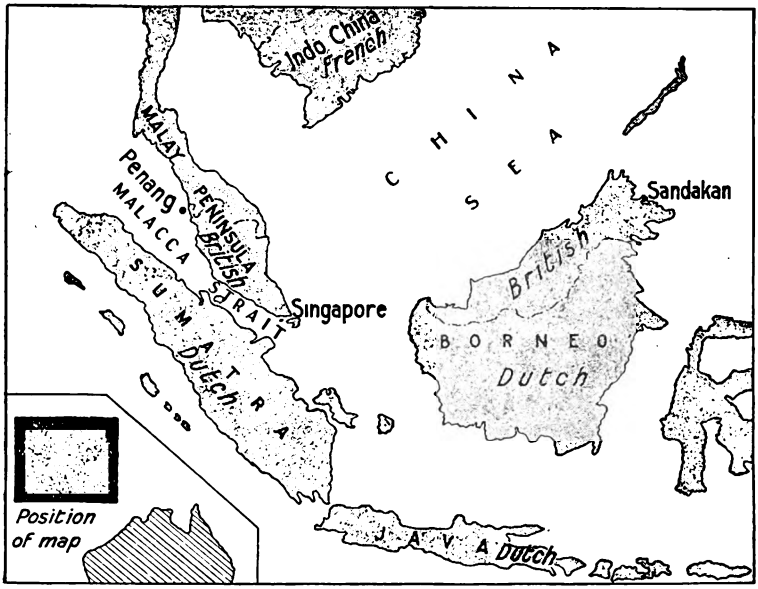
Gneisenau and *Scharnhorst* were going to South America, still dreaded their possible appearance in the Java Sea. Rumours were current that the *Emden, Königsberg,* and *Geier* were all in Malaysian waters, while two armed merchant cruisers—the *Prinz Eitel Friedrich* and *Cormoran*—were at large somewhere, and other possibly armed merchantmen lay sheltering in Dutch ports. Consequently Admiral Jerram felt obliged to leave the big German cruisers to his colleague in Australia:—

> As regards suggestion for combined sweep from Rabaul, I think that while you are to the north-eastward of Australia it is better for me to remain west of New Guinea.

This Malaysian patrol was carried out in force, British, French, and Japanese ships searching around Sumatra, Java, Sandakan, and the Malacca Strait, but finding no trace of the German squadron.

It will be seen that the suggested search of the Marshalls and Carolines had been rejected by Jerram because of his



AREA OF MALAYSIAN PATROL

The position of this area in relation to Australia is shown by the black rectangle in the small inset map.

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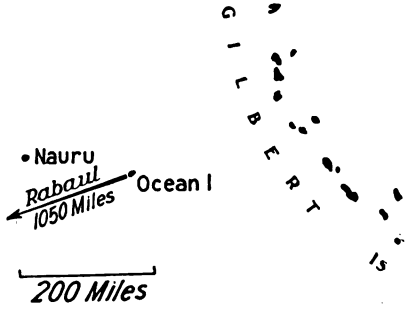
belief that the presence of Count von Spee in Malaysia, though less probable than a withdrawal to South America, would be so much more dangerous that its possibility called for the first attention of his whole squadron. By the 13th of September, when his search of Malaysia had been completed, the Admiralty's arrangements for convoying the Australian and New Zealand transports to Aden supervened. The Admiralty had by then decided to use almost the whole Australian Squadron for this escort. This would leave Australia and the New Guinea expedition without a protecting squadron between them and von Spee, whom Jerram now believed to have gone eastward. Jerram did not think it likely that the Germans would double back; but he had had no definite news of them for over a month. It was therefore arranged between him and the Admiralty that his main force—the *Minotaur, Ibuki,* and *Chikuma*—should sail for New Britain, he himself moving to Hong Kong to control the many threads of his command. This plan was presently changed; but it may be inferred that the British authorities (probably for sound political reasons) regarded both the early despatch of the dominion forces for Europe and the safeguarding of Australia and the New Guinea expedition against the possibility—however remote—of attack, as more important than the direction of concentrated effort to hunt down the German squadron.

V

At the outbreak of war Nauru was administered by the Jaluit Company as a German possession, but was occupied and practically owned by the Pacific Phosphates Company, four of whose ten directors, including one of the two managing directors, were German. The German Government had also stipulated that all the Company's staff appointments, as they fell vacant, should be filled by Germans. As a result of this stipulation the manager on Nauru (Captain Haefcke) was a German, while of the sixty-three European employees



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twenty-two were avowedly German and three others had distinctly German names. Roughly speaking, the population at the outbreak of war consisted of 30 Germans, 70 British subjects, 1,400 natives, and about 1,000 Chinese and Caroline Islanders in the Company's employ. Two of the thirty Germans were Government officials, and a few others were wireless operators.

In the middle of July[15] Captain Haefcke suddenly left his work on Nauru and went to Rabaul, notifying the Company that he had gone "in connection with business with the Government which will be explained in later correspondence." On the 1st of August, while Haefcke was still away, news came through the wireless station to the German officials that war was imminent with England, France, and Russia. The Administrator at once persuaded the Company's acting-manager, a young and inexperienced Englishman, to send the *Pronto*—a Norwegian vessel under charter to the Company, which was at the time lying off Nauru waiting for a cargo—with Government despatches to Jaluit. The young manager was not, of course, informed that any war was imminent. On the 5th the Administrator received definite news that war had been declared by Britain, and again kept it to himself. On the same day Haefcke returned from Rabaul; and on the 6th the Administrator demanded the loan of a second vessel to be sent to Rabaul "in consequence of the outbreak of war between Germany and Russia." Besides important despatches for the Governor, it was to take along an experienced wireless operator and material for completing the Bitapaka wireless station. Haefcke—carefully acting through two British employees of the Company—handed over the *Zambezi,* a British vessel also waiting off Nauru under charter.

Probably the wireless material was the most important part of the *Zambezi's* cargo. Yap and Nauru, where the two high-powered wireless stations of the German Pacific chain were situated, are about 2,000 miles apart. In 1914 it had not yet been discovered how to carry on signalling with sureness and regularity over such a distance. The Bitapaka station was intended to bridge the gap, but was still unfinished at

[15] The date suggests some connection with the warning message of 11 July to von Spee, but the inference is uncertain.

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the outbreak of war, and had to be hurriedly made ready for the reception and transmission of messages. Its working, as might be expected, very soon become unsatisfactory; indeed on the 9th of August Yap was obliged to insist that Bitapaka "give every word three times," and just before the destroyers' raid the engine of the wireless plant was under repair. It is evident that one of the orders brought back by Haefcke from Rabaul was to send along at once, from the Nauru station's stores, material for strengthening and improving the Bitapaka plant; and an entry in the Postmaster's diary[16] on the 10th of August shows that Rabaul was anxiously expecting a vessel from Nauru.

When the *Encounter,* as already mentioned,[17] captured the *Zambezi* just outside St. George's Channel, the prize had aboard not only the wireless operator and cement and bedplates for Diesel engines, but also a German engineer, Brauns by name, to whom the Governor's despatches had been entrusted. Instead of destroying them at once, he gave them to a steward with instructions to throw the packet overboard directly a certain sign was given;[18] but the steward chose to misunderstand his orders, and the precious packet was seized in time by the boarding officer from the *Encounter.* The enclosed letters, mostly containing official news of matter intercepted by the wireless station, included the following document, which has several points of interest:—

The Imperial Administration at Nauru has chartered the steamer *Zambezi* for a journey to Rabaul and back, to transmit important despatches, as wireless communication with Rabaul has not been possible for the last few days. The wireless administration is sending to the *Komet* an experienced operator, Mr. Ulrich, as useful wireless communication with Rabaul cannot be effected otherwise. The local wireless station could also establish an emergency communication within two days.

At the request of the Imperial Administration Engineer Brauns has undertaken to transmit the despatches, or in case of need to destroy them.

The local population at the time of the vessel's departure had no proper knowledge of the real state of affairs.

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[16] *See Appendix No. 12.* [17] *See p. 15.*

[18] This seems to indicate that the *Encounter's* nationality was not immediately ascertained, and that Brauns had some expectation of finding a German warship near Rabaul.

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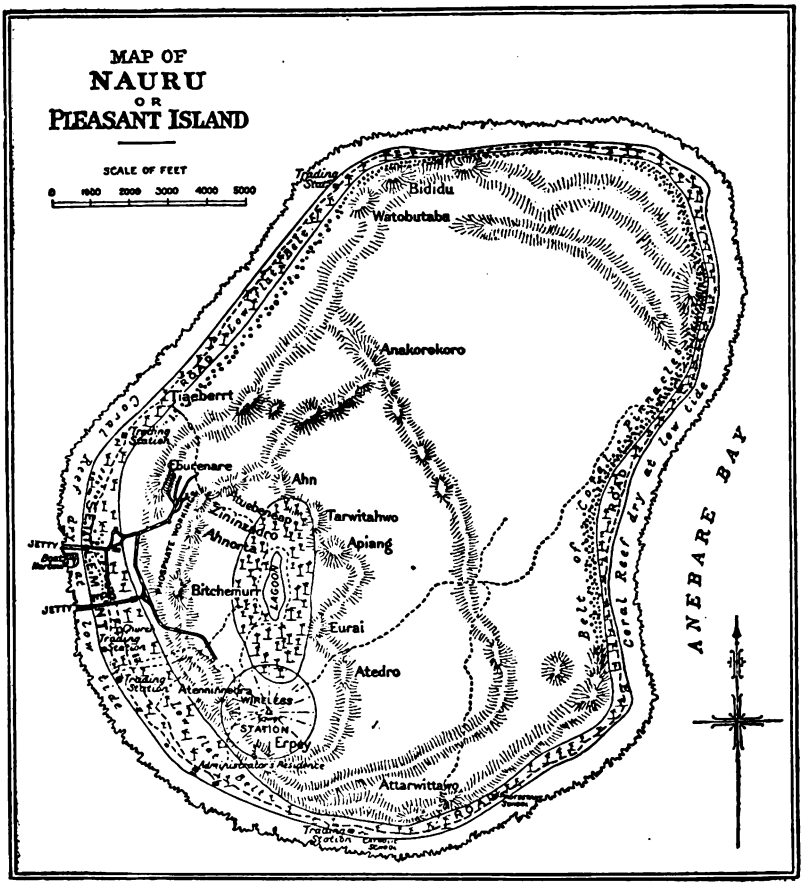
Map No. 3



NAURU ISLAND

By courtesy of The British Phosphate Commission.

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This letter, signed by W. Wostrack, the Administrator, and dated the 6th of August, shows clearly that both the *Pronto* and the *Zambezi* had been commandeered on false pretences as far as the British employees of the Company and the masters of the vessels were concerned.

The *Zambezi* once away, however, there was no need for further concealment. On the 7th the Administrator announced that Germany was at war with England, and proclaimed a state of martial law. Yet even at this moment he did not so inform vessels lying off Nauru; on the contrary, he inveigled ashore the master of the British vessel *Messina,* arrested him, and attempted to seize his ship. The mate of the vessel took alarm, sheered off in good time, and made straight for Ocean Island, to which place he carried the first news of the outbreak of war.

For the next few weeks Nauru remained quiet, and the Germans spent most of their time in training a native "police" force. But provisions began to run low, and on the 26th Joseph Clarke, the Company's chief engineer, was allowed to use the *Frithjof* (another Norwegian vessel under charter) to visit the British Resident on Ocean Island and endeavour to obtain food from him. This was, of course, impossible, and the suggestion was flatly rejected. It was arranged, however, that the Company's manager on Ocean Island should send off one cargo of rice for the Chinese employees, and that Wostrack should be asked to let the British subjects on Nauru go if they so desired, thus leaving the German Administration only its own subjects to provide for. Wostrack, for his part, did not believe in options. Clarke returned to Nauru on the 4th of September with his message; on the 5th the following notice was issued:—

> Seeing that the British Government has detained provisions belonging to the Pacific Phosphate Company and the Jaluit Company of Nauru, and that sufficient provender for the whole European population is not to hand, I, the Imperial Administrator, order all British subjects now residing on Nauru to leave the island as soon as possible.

Accordingly, on the 6th the *Frithjof* left again for Ocean Island with 41 men, 6 women, and 2 children, all British nationals, aboard her.

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Three days later the German population received a shock. The *Melbourne,* as mentioned before, was to be detached from the *Australia* to destroy the Nauru wireless station as soon as the Samoan convoy was safely ashore. Early on the 4th of September, therefore, she left Suva, reached Nauru at daylight on the 9th, and landed a surprise party—four officers, twenty-one petty officers and men—through heavy surf at one of the piers constructed by the Phosphate Company some distance from the main settlement. From the pier a friendly native, who happened to be there, lowered a gangway ladder, and so helped the party to land without injury or loss of life. Lieutenant-Commander Blomfield,[19] who was in charge of the landing-party, occupied a building at the shore end of the pier, and promptly marched off with six men to the Administrator's house two miles away, made him prisoner, took his promise of unconditional surrender, and sent him aboard the *Melbourne.* Then at 7.15 a.m. he turned his attention to the wireless station. It was deserted, but had been put out of action by its own engineers—either at sight of the *Melbourne,* or possibly earlier, when it was found that Yap did not answer and Rabaul was out of order. At any rate, the dismantling was thoroughly completed; the resident engineers were made prisoners of war and sent off to the *Melbourne;* at about 1 o'clock—seven hours after the first landing—the landing-party was re-embarked, its only loss being one rifle.

The essence of this little expedition was speed and surprise. As the captain of the *Melbourne* wrote later:—

> It is apparent that no defence was organized; but, had it not been for the promptitude with which Lieutenant-Commander Blomfield acted, the Germans and their armed police could have defended the wireless station to such an extent that its capture could only have been effected after more men had been landed, and at a cost of much time and more casualties than the complement of a light cruiser could afford without loss of efficiency.

The advance with only six men by a road through thick bush for two miles to the settlement, and the further advance, also through bush, to the wireless station were daring, and they were successful because they were daring.

[19] Commr. M. A. Blomfield, O.B.E.; R.N.; b. Pilkington, Lancs., Eng., 16 June, 1884.

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The terms of surrender also need notice:—

In view of the fact that His Imperial Majesty's Possession of Nauru has not suffered injury at the hands of the Captain of His Britannic Majesty's cruiser *Melbourne*, I undertake on behalf of His Imperial German Majesty that repair will not be permitted to the wireless telegraph station for the use of German subjects during the war.

I also undertake to deliver myself up to British authority when called upon to do so, being now released on my word of honour.

W. WOSTRACK, Imperial Administrator.

As at Apia, and again later in New Britain, the German officials carefully avoided a formal surrender of their territory. At the same time they also avoided—except during the second Australian visit to New Guinea, still to be narrated—any show of resistance, and on the slightest provocation (or without any provocation at all) appealed to the Hague Convention to protect their territories from bombardment. It may be gathered (not, indeed, from any explicit evidence, but from the bearing and language of the prisoners) that eventual victory was looked upon as certain, and the approved German policy was to avoid damage by every possible means to possessions that Germany must soon regain. Wostrack, it may be added, kept his parole rigidly, although Nauru was necessarily left alone for several months, and some of the wireless operators offered to reinstate the station for him; and, while the other Germans remained vindictive to the last, he honourably gave the British officials "every assistance" when the island was at last formally occupied.

It will be remembered that an Admiralty message, received on the 19th of August, directed the occupation of Nauru, Angaur, and Yap. Whatever Admiral Patey may have thought at the time, his experience of Samoa decided him against carrying out this order without protest. Samoa was very short of food; in order to prevent immediate trouble with the Chinese coolies employed on the plantation there, a transport had to be sent off at once from Suva with thirty tons of rice, and another steamer was chartered to follow with other provisions. At Suva the admiral learnt further that all the German Pacific colonies were reported to be in the same

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condition. They produced very little in the way of food-stuffs suitable for non-native residents, and had been dependent on imports; when their trade was cut off, starvation came in sight.

On the 5th of September, therefore, while on his way from Suva towards Australia, Admiral Patey telegraphed to the Admiralty:—

> Unless strong reasons to the contrary exist, submit that Angaur and Nauru should not be occupied, but their wireless telegraph stations should be destroyed. From experience gained at Samoa, and from information received, German Pacific islands are very short of food. Occupying them will entail our feeding the inhabitants as well as the garrisons, will relieve the Germans of this responsibility, and become an anxiety to ourselves. Already food has had to be sent to Apia. Yap, being larger and having submarine cable, might be occupied.

To this message no reply was made. But it was obviously impossible for the *Melbourne* to leave a force in occupation; and Captain Silver,[20] when he rejoined the squadron, put in a report very much in the same sense. Nauru, he said, was for the time being useless to the Navy as a wireless telegraph station, though it might be useful commercially in the future. If it were garrisoned, the Phosphate Company's workmen, as well as the garrison, must be fed by the occupying power. Access to the island was so difficult that no German warship would call there for provisions unless she had unlimited time at her disposal, and this no German ship was likely to have during the war. His solution was that the Phosphate Company should be allowed to carry on, using neutral vessels to victual the island within reason.

This recommendation having been telegraphed to the Admiralty on the 23rd, the matter passed out of naval cognisance, but subsequent events may be summarised as follows: The Company naturally began at once to press for permission to start work again. In mid-September they had been informed by the British Government that, "as soon as Nauru had been occupied by British forces," they must re-provision the island—an order which apparently meant also that they might start work. It was not, however, till the 6th of November that the flag was actually hoisted and the

[20] Vice-Admiral M. L'E. Silver, C.B.E.; R.N; of Bradenham, Bucks., Eng., b. Chatham, Eng., 7 Aug., 1869.

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island formally occupied, all German officials and employees being at the same time deported and the previously expelled British employees brought back.

It was after this final occupation that a soldier, wandering at large on the island and casually investigating the caves along its shores, stumbled upon a carefully hidden package of papers. This proved to contain the German wireless operator's diary and the messages transmitted or received between April and August. While the mass of these messages is in warships' cypher—orders sent to the squadron at Ponape or to the *Planet* at Rabaul, probably of great interest if the key were known—a good many are in plain language or in the cypher whose key was captured in the *Hobart,* and these have been used to verify the account of the German squadron's movements and of events on Nauru.

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CHAPTER III

CAPTURE OF THE GERMAN COLONIES: GERMAN NEW GUINEA.

It has already been explained[1] that the Commonwealth Government did not willingly consent to that diversion of the Australian Squadron from its primary objective which was necessitated by the provision of an expedition destined to occupy the German islands in the north. Senator Millen made that reluctance very clear in his minute of the 8th of August. But the despatch of a small force in an armed merchantman was willingly undertaken, and we may now note the preparations made on these lines. As they were chiefly military in character, they are here described briefly; the fuller account is given in Volume X of this series, which also deals with all the purely military operations incident to the occupation of German New Guinea.

The force was to be a combined naval and military body, raised for the special occasion, and enlisted for a term not exceeding six months. It should be remembered that provision was simultaneously being made for the expeditionary force of 20,000 men already offered to the Imperial Government for service outside Australia. On the 11th of August the Director of Naval Reserves reported that he could raise a naval contingent of 500 without difficulty, getting about 200 men from Sydney, 100 from Melbourne, and the rest from the other States east of the Bight. Advertisements in the press called for volunteers from time-expired seamen of the Royal Navy and seamen belonging to the Naval Reserves of Great Britain or Australia. The force thus raised was organised in six companies under Commander Beresford;[2] the military contingent was organised as a battalion of infantry at war strength, two machine-gun sections, a signalling section, and the necessary complement of Australian Army Medical Corps: and the whole combined force was put under command of Colonel William Holmes,[3] who at the time commanded the 6th

[1] *See pp. 47-9.*

[2] Commr. J. A. H. Beresford; R.A.N. Of Melbourne; b. Laugharne, Wales, 11 Aug., 1861.

[3] Maj.-Gen. W. Holmes, C.M.G., D.S.O., V.D. Commanded A.N. & M.E.F., 1914/15; 5th Inf. Bde., 1915/16; 4th Div., 1916/17. Secretary Water and Sewerage Board, Sydney; b. Sydney, 12 Sept., 1862. Killed in action in Flanders, 2 July, 1917.

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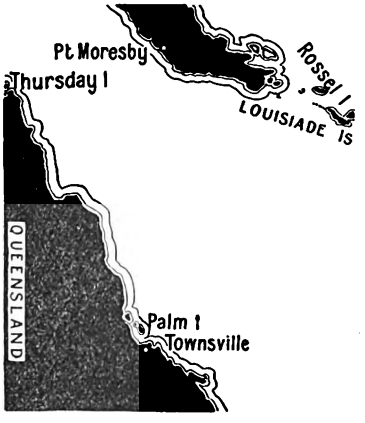
Infantry Brigade of the Citizen Forces. This expedition left Sydney on the 19th of August in the *Berrima,* a vessel of 11,120 tons belonging to the P. & O. Company commissioned as an auxiliary cruiser and placed for the time in charge of Commander Stevenson.[4] This officer was also appointed naval chief of staff to Colonel Holmes.

In the war scheme drawn up some time before for Australian use it had been arranged that the Kennedy Regiment belonging to the Charters Towers-Townsville district (one of the citizen-force regiments enrolled under the compulsory training scheme, which included the trainees of northern Queensland) should in war-time garrison Thursday Island. Accordingly, as soon as news of the outbreak of war was received, mobilisation was ordered; and on the 8th of August the regiment, with a strength of over a thousand, embarked in the s.s. *Kanowna,* 6,942 tons, belonging to the A.U.S.N. Company. It reached Thursday Island safely, and a day or two later volunteers were called for "for service outside Australia," the Defence Act providing that no citizen forces could be sent outside the Commonwealth without their own consent. About 500 of the men volunteered, and were sent on in the *Kanowna* to Port Moresby, where they were to receive further orders from Admiral Patey. But when the vessel reached Port Moresby, it was found that the admiral had left to take up the Samoan convoy that very morning. A long wait ensued.



As has been said before, the admiral did not believe in allowing the Australian expedition to start for New Britain without escort as long as the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* were at large and unaccounted for. He had therefore left the *Sydney* in Australian waters in charge of all warships and transports belonging to the expedition

[4] Rear-Admiral J. B. Stevenson, C.M.G.; R.N. (later R.A.N.); b. Liverpool, Eng., 7 Aug., 1876.

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with definite orders that the *Berrima* should not proceed beyond Palm Island, or the *Kanowna* beyond Port Moresby, until he returned from Samoa. So from Suva on his way back he sent further orders that the whole convoy—escorting warships, *Berrima, Kanowna,* supply-ships, and, if possible, the submarines and their tenders *Protector* and *Upolu*—must meet him on the 9th at a rendezvous east of the Louisiade group and close to Rossel Island. The hospital ship *Grantala* and a collier from Noumea were to follow direct to Rabaul, reaching that place not earlier than the 13th.

The *Sydney* met the *Berrima* off Sandy Cape on the 22nd of August, and escorted her to Palm Island, where for ten days or so the expeditionary force was daily exercised and in other ways prepared for its work. On the 23rd the *Encounter* arrived, on the 30th the storeship *Aorangi,* and on the 2nd of September the submarines. That day the three cruisers, the submarines, and the storeship left for Port Moresby, where they took in coal and stores to serve them through the expeditionary period. Defects which developed in the condensers of the *Upolu* (the submarines' parent ship) and the low speed of the *Protector* (their escort) had delayed these vessels to such an extent that in the end they were sent away by themselves to join the convoy later at Simpson Harbour.

At Port Moresby all the while lay the *Kanowna,* officers and men alike ignorant of their objective, but doing their best in difficult conditions to fit themselves for any duty that might be required of them. To understand what followed it must be remembered that this was the first occasion on which a citizen regiment had been mobilised for war, and that the garrisoning of Thursday Island—normally defended by about 100 men of the permanent artillery—was considered a matter of urgency, to be attended to without the slightest delay. Consequently the regiment had been mobilised in great haste, without proper medical inspection, and comprised both trainees under the compulsory scheme (some of whom were not yet eighteen) and middle-aged members of local rifle-clubs. It was short of officers, and of supplies of all kinds; and its commander neither had time to provision the *Kanowna* for a long voyage, nor had, when embarking, contemplated a voyage beyond Thursday Island. As for the vessel's crew, they were, so to

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LIEUTENANT-COMMANDER C. B. ELWELL, R.N.

Killed while leading a charge on the first German trench,
11 September 1914.

To face p. 77.

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speak, swept off their feet. They had engaged for an ordinary coastal voyage between Australian ports, but found themselves first snapped up at Townsville to take a thousand soldiers to Torres Straits, and then commandeered to fetch troops to Port Moresby and to some indefinite port well outside Australian waters, whether they liked it or not. Further, there was no officer directly responsible for the vessel in her new employ. The officer commanding the troops had no authority except over them. The master of the vessel had no orders covering her use as a transport. The one naval officer on board, who had joined at Thursday Island, was appointed for pilotage and intelligence duties only. Admiral Patey was out of reach for the time, though certain orders from him were given to the commander of the troops through the Lieutenant-Governor of Papua.

When, therefore, on the 4th of September, the *Sydney* and the *Berrima* reached Port Moresby, their first impressions of the *Kanowna* were scarcely favourable. Captain Glossop[5] reported that she was out of all stores, and must be supplied temporarily from the *Sydney's* own stock. Colonel Holmes, after an inspection, made up his mind that the troops were not fit for active service. Strictly speaking, this was true enough; they were just what one might expect a citizen regiment to be that had been only recently organised under a new scheme, hurriedly mobilised at a distance from any well-stocked dépôts, and deprived of half its strength to garrison Thursday Island—and they could not but contrast unfavourably with the well-equipped, systematically trained force that had come from Palm Island. Consequently, although the men were keen and included many expert bushmen, Holmes, through Glossop, and with his entire concurrence, on the 6th recommended Admiral Patey to discharge the *Kanowna* and her troops from further service.

The admiral was at first reluctant to take such a step. He had counted on that additional contingent, and wanted to know why he should be deprived of it. In a few hours the matter settled itself. Early on the 7th the convoy left Port Moresby, and within a couple of hours the *Kanowna* was seen to be falling behind and then stopping altogether:

[5] Vice-Admiral J. C. T. Glossop, C.B.; R.N. Of Bridport, Dorset, Eng.; b. Twickenham, Middlesex, Eng., 23 Oct., 1871. Died 24 Dec., 1934.

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she also hoisted the signal "Lost control." Investigation by the *Sydney* showed that the firemen had mutinied, flatly refusing to take the vessel outside Australian waters.[6] Glossop at once ordered her back to Townsville, although the troops aboard promptly volunteered to do the stoking, and in fact did stoke her all the way to Townsville. Holmes of course concurred in Glossop's decision, and asked him to transmit to the admiral a recommendation that the troops be disbanded, and reorganised if more men were really wanted.

Confronted with these actions and recommendations, and unable to use his personal judgment, Admiral Patey felt he had no option but to concur with the decision of Holmes and Glossop. Moreover, it was impossible to await the arrival of the reorganised regiment, as the New Guinea operations were subject to a time-limit and his cruisers would soon be required for other duties. He therefore notified the Naval Board that the discharge of the *Kanowna* was approved, and that the *Berrima* contingent would be enough for his needs; and the zeal and loyalty of these volunteers from the Kennedy Regiment went for nothing.

II

The force, therefore, which assembled on the morning of the 9th of September off the Louisiades consisted of the *Australia,* back from safeguarding the occupation of Samoa; the *Sydney, Encounter, Warrego,* and *Yarra,* convoying from Port Moresby the auxiliary cruiser *Berrima* and storeship *Aorangi;* and the two submarines. The *Parramatta* came up later in the day with an oiler, the *Murex,* and a collier, the *Koolonga,* which had not been able to keep up with the convoy proper. The *Australia* had another collier with her (the *Waihora*), and a third (the *Whangape*) arrived from Noumea next day.

After a conference with Colonel Holmes, Captain Glossop of the *Sydney,* Commander Stevenson of the *Berrima,* and Commander Cumberlege of the destroyer flotilla, Admiral Patey issued his operation order for the attack on Rabaul. The cruising order followed the lines of that previously conceived for the convoy to Samoa, and was based on the assumption (now unlikely, but still possible) that the big German cruisers

[6] They alleged other grievances, but this was the essential one.

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might be off New Britain. By day the fleet was to proceed in two columns a mile apart, the *Australia* and *Sydney* heading one, the *Encounter* the other; the *Berrima* would follow the *Sydney,* and be followed by the destroyers; the storeship, colliers, &c., were placed between the *Encounter* and the submarines. At night the columns would be six miles apart, with the destroyers two miles ahead of them. If an enemy ship were sighted, the newer warships would attack, while the *Encounter* led the whole convoy away from the action.

In the light of the former visit, supplemented by later information, it was now known that Rabaul would not be the only object of attack; the wireless station was somewhere south of the bay, and to be reached from Herbertshöhe or some other landing-place near by. It was therefore settled between the admiral and Colonel Holmes that both Rabaul and Herbertshöhe should be garrisoned; that the military contingent should be landed at Rabaul, which was the chief settlement of the colony and the permanent centre of occupation; and that the Herbertshöhe garrison should be drawn from the Naval Brigade and placed under Commander Beresford. From this latter force detachments would be sent to reconnoitre inland in search of wireless stations. The operation order therefore went on to provide that, should a preliminary reconnaissance show that Blanche Bay was empty, the *Parramatta* was to examine the jetty at Rabaul and report whether the *Berrima* could use it; while the *Sydney,* which had at Port Moresby been directed to embark 50 men of the naval contingent carried in the *Berrima,* would transfer 25 of them to the *Warrego* and *Yarra* for landing at Kabakaul (four miles east of Herbertshöhe), and herself land the other 25 at Herbertshöhe. The objective of these 50 men, starting inland from two points on the coast four miles apart, was the still unlocated wireless station; the reason for thus dividing them was that Admiral Patey's information (which had not been very well digested for him by subordinates in Sydney) led him to believe that there were two wireless stations—one straight inland from Kabakaul, already in use, the other straight inland from Herbertshöhe, still in course of erection.[1]

[1] The truth was that there *were* two, but both were at Bitapaka. The main station had been hastily made more or less serviceable since the war began, but was not to be depended upon, and a low-powered set of instruments had been put together to supplement it for local use. Another station was being got ready near Toma, but no news of that had reached the Australian staff.

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During these proceedings the transport and other auxiliaries were to remain in Karavia Bay (the southern bight of Blanche Bay); the *Australia's* picket-boats were to sweep the channel to, and the anchorage in, Simpson Harbour; and guard was to be kept against interference from outside (in case any stray German cruiser should be in the neighbourhood) by the *Encounter* off Cape Tawui and the submarines off Cape Gazelle.

It was at first intended that the *Sydney* and destroyers should be detached at dusk on the 10th to go ahead and reconnoitre Simpson Harbour before dawn on the 11th. But the late arrival of the *Parramatta* and her convoy, and the obvious slowness of several other vessels, made it necessary to alter the cruising order and despatch the fleet in three sections. Accordingly at 6 a.m. on the 10th the *Sydney* and destroyers went off to their appointed task; the *Australia* and *Berrima* followed them at 8 a.m., and the rest of the convoy was left to come along slowly in the charge of the *Encounter* and submarines.

Apart from this divergence, the operation order was carried out almost to the minute. The *Sydney* and destroyers, reaching the scene of operations about 3.30 a.m. on the 11th, searched Blanche Bay, Talili Bay, and the channel on both sides of the Duke of York group without finding any enemy; the *Parramatta* reported that the Rabaul jetty was clear and available for the *Berrima*. The *Australia* reached Karavia Bay at 6 a.m., left the *Berrima* there, dropped her picket-boats to sweep for mines, and went to sea again.

III

The search for the wireless station had already begun. At 6 a.m., just as the *Australia* entered Karavia Bay, the landing-party for Kabakaul—25 petty officers and men under Lieutenant Bowen[8] and Midshipman Buller,[9] accompanied by Captain Pockley,[10] A.A.M.C., a private of the same corps, and a wireless telegraphist—was transferred from the *Sydney* to the two destroyers, and by them landed at 7 o'clock on a jetty

[8] Commr. R. G. Bowen; R.A.N. Of Melbourne; b. Taggerty, Vic., 14 Jan., 1879.
[9] Lieut.-Commr. R. L. Buller; R.A N.R. Public servant; of Moonee Ponds, Vic.; b. Geelong, Vic., 21 May, 1894.
[10] Capt. B. C. A. Pockley; A.A.M.C. Medical practitioner; of Wahroonga, N.S.W.; b. North Sydney, 4 June, 1890. Died of wounds, 11 Sept., 1914.

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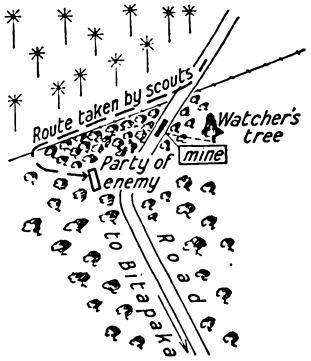
a little east of the Kabakaul pier. No map of the country was available; the map supplied to Lieutenant Bowen (reproduced opposite) showed roads near Herbertshöhe, but stopped short of Kabakaul. There were, however, a few houses near the jetty, and a Chinaman and four natives found in them were induced to disclose the fact that the Germans had retreated inland, and to point out the road that led to the Bitapaka station. This road had been specially constructed for the purpose of transporting mechanism and supplies from the jetty to the station; it was fairly well made, about twelve feet wide, and ran through thick jungle for about three miles in a direction generally southerly. The last half-mile into Bitapaka ran south-west. About three-quarters of a mile from the jetty it crossed the main track leading from Herbertshöhe to the principal coastal plantations. Telephone lines ran from Kabakaul to the wireless station and to Herbertshöhe.

Before leaving the houses Bowen was reinforced by Gunners Yeo[11] and Bacon[12] and ten men from the destroyers, whom he employed as connecting files between the landing force and the beach. He then advanced along the line of the road, taking care to keep off the road itself. Scouts worked ahead through the scrub on either side, and the main body did its best to follow them; but the jungle was too thick to allow the passage of any organised body, and the men were frequently forced on to the edges of the road. Just beyond the cross-roads, a large coconut plantation bordered the road on the right, and beyond its southern fence there was a patch of exceptionally thick scrub, which forced the scouting party to diverge from the roadline westwards. Working their way back where the scrub thinned again, they found themselves



[11] Lieut.-Commr. S. T. P. Yeo; R.N. Of Stoke, Devonport, Eng.; b. Stonehouse, Devonshire, Eng., 7 Sept., 1884.
[12] Lieut. C. F. Bacon; R.N.; b. Kelvedon, Essex, Eng., 20 Dec., 1879.

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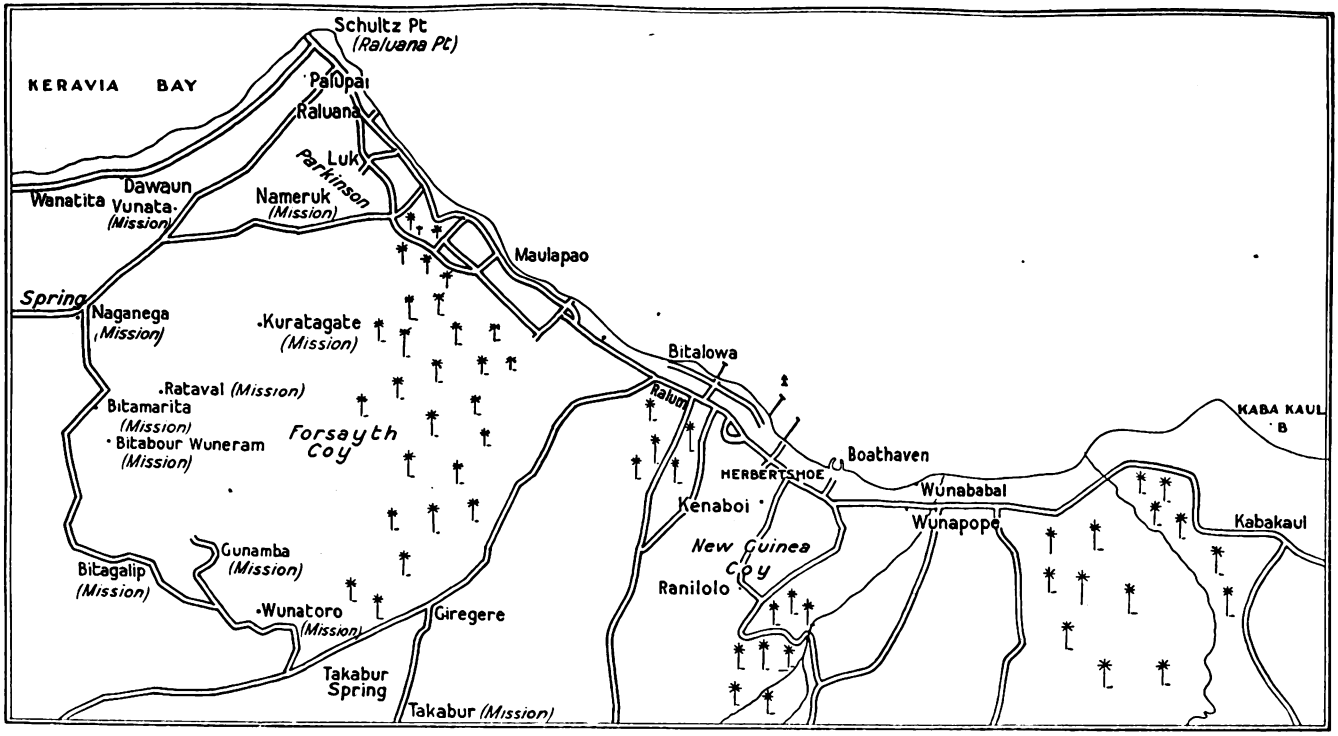

Map No. 5

THE DISTRICT AROUND HERBERTSHÖHE

Copied from the only map available at the time of the attack on Bitapaka. The spelling is that of the original.

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directly in the rear of the first line of defence, where three Germans with about twenty natives were watching the advance of the main body. Petty Officer Palmer,[13] who was in charge of the scouts, promptly shot the German who appeared to be in command, and after a short skirmish the wounded man (a Sergeant-Major Mauderer or Maurder) surrendered and ordered his natives to cease fire. He was then taken to Bowen, who made him march up the middle of the road calling to his comrades that they might as well surrender, for 800 Australians were close behind. Hearing Mauderer, but not understanding him, the two other Germans and a native guide ran out on to the road, and were at once captured by men whom Bowen had sent forward along the roadside. They proved to be Captain Wuchert, of the Reserve, who was in charge of the Bitapaka defences, and Ober-Leutnant Mayer. They afterwards asserted that they had watched the attacking party "filing past so near that they could have been hit with a pebble"; but as a matter of fact they had been seen more than 500 yards away, and were captured before the main body of Australians reached the spot where they were hiding. Indeed, they came on to the road at Mauderer's call, under the impression that no Australians had yet penetrated so far.[14]

This little incident was of some importance. In the first place, maps of the Bitapaka road were found on the prisoners, and our men were no longer working in the dark. In the second place, the German authorities were through Mauderer's unwilling bluff completely deceived as to the strength of the attacking force. It was afterwards discovered that a German concealed in one of the Kabakaul houses had telephoned to headquarters behind Herbertshöhe, and to Bitapaka, the correct statement that the destroyers had landed only 30 men. Lieutenant Mayer, who with 150 natives had charge of the defence of the coast-line from Herbertshöhe to Kabakaul, consequently decided to leave 100 of his men at Takubar, a

[13] Petty Officer G. R. Palmer; R.A.N.R. Master mariner; of Parkville, Vic.; b. Chelmsford Essex, Eng., 16 Jan., 1870.

[14] The official German account, written up by von Klewitz from his subordinate officers' reports, gives a rather different account of this episode. Mayer, it says, found Mauderer lying wounded behind a tree, and shortly afterwards saw Wuchert on the road talking to a man in khaki whom he took for Kempf, but who was in reality Bowen. The account in the text is taken from Bowen's report as amplified by statements of the German officers concerned made to an officer of the Australian Navy during their internment at Holdsworthy. The action of Bowen, who behaved most gallantly throughout but who appears to have infringed, in ignorance, a rule of war, is more fully discussed in *Volume X.*

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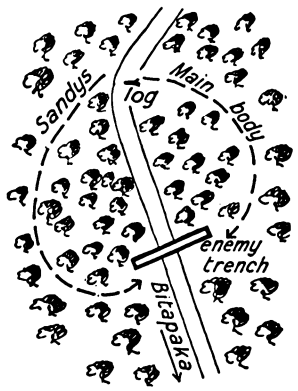
mile and a half away, where they were available for work at Herbertshöhe or at Bitapaka as well as for his own support; with the remaining 50 he marched for the Kabakaul-Bitapaka road, intending to let the small invading force pass and then to cut it off from its base. Mauderer's shouts altered the whole situation. Though neither Wuchert nor Mayer understood what he said, it was evidently heard and understood by some natives; for not long afterwards the report that 800 Australians had landed and were making for Bitapaka was somehow conveyed to Captain von Klewitz, the commander of the whole German defence. He, surprised but undoubting, pointed out to the Governor that he had not the strength to resist 800 men, and persuaded him to order a retreat farther inland. Thus the whole scheme of coastal defence broke down, and the only active resistance experienced by the Australian force came from small bodies of defenders still left on the Bitapaka road.

At the moment, of course, this break-down was not known to the Australians; they only knew that resistance had begun. Bowen therefore halted his small force, and sent Buller with the three prisoners back to Kabakaul with a message asking Cumberlege for more reinforcements. That officer, who had landed, promptly went back to the *Warrego*, called up from both destroyers every man who could be spared, and despatched 59 men (14 armed with rifles, the rest with pistols and cutlasses) under Lieutenant Hill[15] of the *Yarra*. This force, pushing on with the utmost possible speed, reached Bowen about 10 a.m.



During the interval several of Bowen's party had crept forward through the scrub to a turn in the road, and had discovered a trench dug across it about 500 yards farther on. From this trench, and from the scrub on either side—partly, it was thought, from natives in trees, though the German officers afterwards denied

[15] Lieut.-Commr. G. A. Hill; R.N.R. (later R.A.N.). Master mariner; of Coogee, N.S.W.; b. Edgbaston, Birmingham, Eng., 1 May, 1880. Died 4 May, 1931.

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that any had been ordered there—a good deal of sniping was going on, and two able seamen, Courtney[16] and Williams,[17] were hit. Besides the trench, pits had been dug along the road, and in one quite close to the attacking force a German was captured. At this moment Hill came up with his reinforcements, and Bowen and he agreed on the operations now to be carried out. From a log lying across the road at the turn the defenders of the trench were to be frontally engaged; meanwhile a small party—Petty Officer Sandys[18] with five men—was to work round the Germans' left flank, and the main body to carry out an attack against their right. As the new advance began, Bowen was wounded by a sniper. Dr. Pockley—who had given his Red Cross badge to another medical helper (Stoker Kember[19]), and consequently could not be distinguished by the enemy from a combatant officer—had already been shot after attending to Seaman Williams. Hill now took command of the party, and continued the slow flanking movement; Buller was sent back to bring up a second reinforcement.

This had been arranged for when Cumberlege sent off his destroyer crews. He had at the same time informed Admiral Patey of the situation, and Commander Beresford was ordered to land another 100 men of the naval contingent. Beresford therefore landed two companies and a machine-gun section at the Kabakaul jetty, and pushed one company forward hastily under Lieutenant-Commander Elwell[20] to reinforce Bowen. This company, met by Buller at the cross-roads, reached the firing line about 1 p.m.; Elwell took command, ordered Hill to take charge of the flanking movement on the left, and himself crossed the road to lead the advance on the right. When less than eighty yards from the trench bayonets were fixed, a charge was ordered, and Elwell, leading it, was shot through the heart from the trench. But Hill was level with him

[16] Able Seaman J. E. Walker; R.A.N.R. (served as John Courtney). Stoker; of Ross Island, Townsville, Q'land. Killed in action, 11 Sept., 1914.

[17] Able Seaman W. G. V. Williams. Melbourne City Council employee; of Northcote, Vic.; b. Richmond, Vic., 24 Nov., 1885. Killed in action, 11 Sept., 1914.

[18] Gunner F. R. Sandys; R.N.; b. Plaistow, Essex, 24 May, 1881.

[19] Leading-Stoker W. Kember; R.A.N. Of Canley Vale, N.S.W.; b. Scaynes Hill, Sussex, Eng., 22 Aug., 1885.

[20] Lieut.-Commr. C. B. Elwell; R.N. Of Wentworthville, N.S.W.; b. Albrighton, Shropshire, Eng., 13 Sept., 1882. Killed in action, 11 Sept., 1914.

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on the left, a small reinforcement under Lieutenant Gillam[21] had just come up, and the defenders found themselves outflanked on both sides; they therefore showed a white flag, to which Hill responded by an order to cease fire, and three Germans climbed out of the trench to discuss terms of surrender with a British officer. With Hill, who wore no coat and no officer's badges, they declined to treat; he therefore determined to take them back to the cross-roads, where Beresford would probably be found, and to withdraw his whole force at the same time—since, their officers once captured, no further resistance was to be expected from the German native troops.

Beresford, leaving his supplies (except ammunition) at the Kabakaul jetty, had brought his second company and the machine-gun section slowly along the road. At the cross-roads he met Hill and his men with the German officers, and told the latter that his only terms were unconditional surrender, both of the enemy forces and of the wireless station. With great reluctance, and only after a very long discussion, the senior officer, Lieutenant Kempf, agreed to these terms, and signed a form drawn up by the military intelligence officer, Captain Travers,[22] who was accompanying the naval force. Beresford then ordered Lieutenant Bond,[23] who commanded the second company, to take half his men, escort Kempf back to the German trench, take the surrender of any forces that might be there, and then advance to the wireless station and enforce surrender there also. Travers went with Bond, and a German interpreter was sent with Kempf.

It so happened that, during the earlier advance, a man of Elwell's reinforcements discovered that the road a little north of the bend had been mined. Wires leading from the mined spot were traced to a large tree three or four hundred yards away; anyone climbing the tree had an excellent view of the Kabakaul road, and the evident intention had been that the watcher should tell an operator at the foot of the tree exactly when to press the firing-key. Though the Australians of

[21] Lieut.-Commr. O. W. Gillam, V.D.; R.A.N.R. Shipping agent and general merchant; of Newcastle, N.S.W.; b. Albany, W. Aust., 26 July, 1877.

[22] Lieut.-Col. R. J. A. Travers, D.S.O. Commanded 26th Bn., A.I.F., 1916/18. Draughtsman; of Bondi, N.S.W.; b. Glen Innes, N.S.W., 21 Apr., 1888.

[23] Commr. T. A. Bond, D.S.O., V.D.; R.A.N.R. Accountant; of Brisbane; b. Bishops Waltham, Hants., Eng., 1872.

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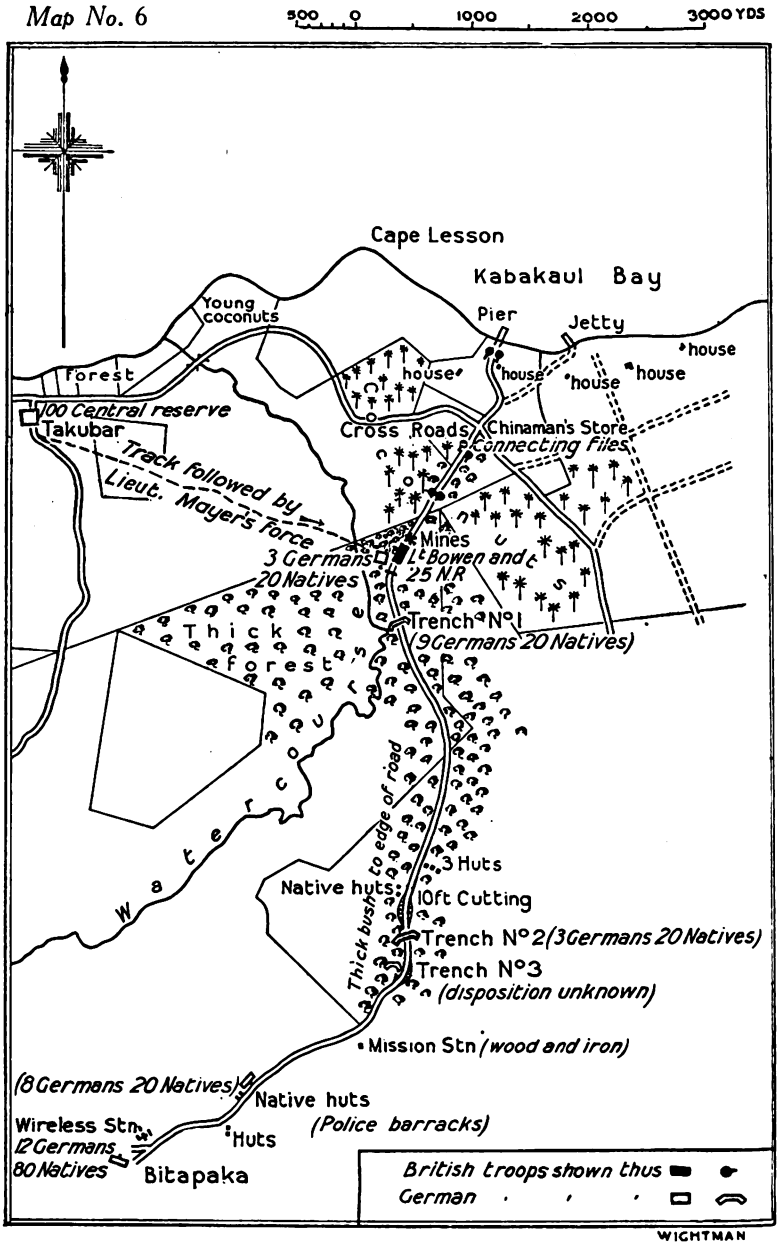

THE ADVANCE TOWARDS BITAPAKA, SHOWING ENEMY DISPOSITIONS AT 9 A.M. ON THE 11TH OF SEPTEMBER, 1914

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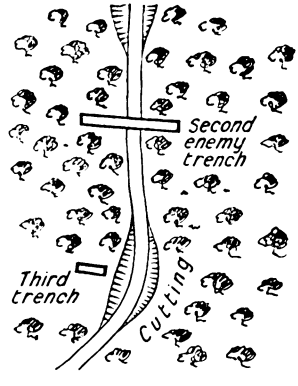
course removed the key and cut the wires, Bond thought it wiser to make Kempf stand on the mined spot while our troops marched past it, in case any other method of explosion had been contrived. He then proceeded to the first German trench, and after a little trouble mustered and made prisoners of the defenders—6 Germans and about 20 natives.

The advance was now continued for nearly two miles along the road, when a second trench was discovered, and its occupants (three Germans and twenty natives) called upon to surrender. The white flag being hoisted, Travers and Kempf went on towards the wireless station. But, while Bond was disarming the natives, firing suddenly broke out from a third trench 250 yards farther on, set on the side of the road above a cutting; the German interpreter who had been sent up with Kempf tried to rally the natives just captured; and, before the little skirmish was over, three Australians had been wounded, and the treacherous interpreter and a good many of his natives shot dead. It is fair to say that none of the other Germans—neither Kempf nor the three found in the trench—took any part in it.



After this incident the main body of the Australians was posted at this second trench, and the machine-gun mounted there. Bond, Travers, Kempf, and a new interpreter from the Australian force (Eitel,[24] of the machine-gun section) went off by themselves towards the wireless station. On their way they caught, first, a cyclist carrying instructions from the German Governor to dismantle the station and retire on Toma; next, a German on horseback bringing to the defenders of the trenches an official message from headquarters reporting the supposed attacking force of 800. This man was promptly sent on to the wireless station by Kempf to announce his surrender and prevent useless opposition. A mile or more from the second trench Bond discovered a native-police barracks, occupied by eight more Germans and another

[24] Cpl. C. C. Eitel (No. 45, A.N. & M.E.F.). Journalist; of Sydney; b. Neutral Bay, N.S.W., 1880.

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twenty natives. In spite of Kempf's orders they refused to surrender, and threatened resistance; but Bond boldly disarmed the Germans, snatching their pistols from the holsters, before hostile action had actually begun; the whole body then surrendered, and was marched off by the three Australians to the wireless station about half-a-mile away. The station being found deserted, the prisoners were at 7 p.m. confined in two rooms—ten Germans in one room, twenty natives in another—and kept under guard by the Australians until reinforcements came up under Buller half-an-hour later. On their arrival Bond and Travers were able to hand over their prisoners and to make an inspection of the station. It was found that the masts had been wrecked, but the machinery was still in good order.

Meanwhile Beresford at the cross-roads began to wonder what had happened. Bond's party had left at 3 p.m., and no news of any kind came from them for ten hours. When about 5 o'clock the firing at the second trench was heard, Buller was sent off with thirty men; later in the evening Midshipman Stirling[25] with another half-company was despatched to direct Bond, if he found the opposition too strong, to withdraw for the night, as the station could be shelled by the *Australia* next morning. Arriving at the second trench, Stirling found it in charge of the machine-gun section only, the rest of the force having gone on at 9 p.m. to join Bond; he therefore put the three wounded men on improvised stretchers, and returned to Beresford with the news that the station was occupied. But opposition of a sort was not quite over; early on the 12th Bond rounded up several more natives armed with rifles, and a party sent up from the base under Midshipman Veale,[26] which reached the station at 10 a.m., encountered a good deal of harmless sniping on the way.

After consultation with Colonel Holmes, Admiral Patey soon decided that the wireless station was too isolated and useless to be permanently occupied. Bond was therefore ordered to put it completely out of action, and to bring back the instruments with him. This was effected by the afternoon

[25] Engr.-Lieut.-Commr. J. P. Stirling; R.A.N.R. Marine engineer; of Carrington, N.S.W.; b. Carrington, 1 July, 1894.

[26] Lieut.-Commr. R. S. Veale; R.A.N.R. Student; of Daylesford and Albert Park, Vic.; b. Lefroy, Tas., 5 Sept., 1893.

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of the 12th, and all the landing-parties, returning at intervals to Kabakaul, were re-embarked on the destroyers and landed at Herbertshöhe that evening.

Such was the raid on Bitapaka—an affair of continuous good luck, used promptly and to the full by the men concerned. Bowen's bluff about the 800 men, Bond's audacity at the police barracks, and the happy accident which prevented the explosion of the road-mine, were the decisive features of the attack; but the coolness and level-headedness of every man engaged, in the first fight in which Australian naval forces had ever taken part, was a noteworthy and excellent omen for the later work of the war.

IV

The party destined for the Herbertshöhe search—consisting of 25 reservists, a private of the A.A.M.C., a wireless telegraphist, and 4 seamen from the *Sydney,* under Sub-Lieutenant Webber[27]—landed without opposition at 6 o'clock. The settlement being apparently deserted, Webber set out for Toma, his objective, by a road which ran south-west from the coast and thus took him at every step farther away both from the Kabakaul party and from Mayer's reserve of natives at Takubar. About two miles inland he sighted a small body of armed men, who instantly disappeared into the bush; no other men were seen, except two riders, one of whom was taking a letter to Admiral Patey from the German Governor, and was therefore passed through the lines. Having penetrated about half-way to Toma without opposition or any discovery, Webber came to the conclusion that his force was not large enough to go farther into unknown country while still keeping in touch with the base; he therefore returned to Herbertshöhe after about twelve hours' absence.

Meanwhile a military detachment—four companies of infantry and a machine-gun section, under command of Lieutenant-Colonel Watson[28]—accompanied by a naval party from the *Sydney* with a 12-pounder gun, landed at Herbertshöhe at 3.30 p.m., garrisoned the settlement, and

[27] Sub-Lieut. (actg. Lieut.) C. Webber; R.A.N.R. Bookkeeper; of Melbourne; b. 16 Jan., 1890. (He subsequently served with the Aust. artillery in France, attaining the rank of major.)

[28] Col. W. W. Russell Watson, C.B., C.M.G., V.D. Commanded 24th Bn., 1915/17; Overseas Training Brigade, 1917/19. Company director; of Balmain, N.S.W.; b. Sydney, 19 May, 1875. Died of illness, 30 June, 1924.

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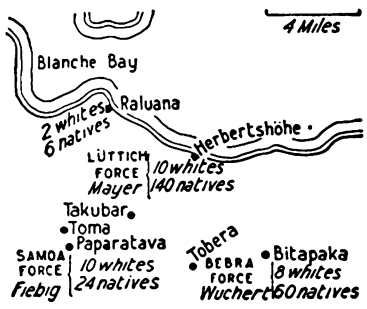
made eastwards to join up with Beresford. The junction was not effected, apparently because the movement began too late in the afternoon; but, as we have seen, it was not needed. Early next morning Watson heard from Beresford that the wireless station had been captured, and further movements inland became unnecessary.

The lack of opposition to these Herbertshöhe parties was due to the "800" report. The German plan had been to allow raiding parties (they expected nothing bigger) to land and work a little inland, and then to cut them off from the coast and force their surrender. The total German force comprised 52 white men and about 240 natives under the command of 9 German officers, two of whom—von Klewitz and Mayer—were officers of the active army and one or two others officers of the reserve. Von Klewitz, who signed himself "Unter-Kommandant" (sub-commander), was in charge of the whole defence scheme, Haber the Governor being the official "Kommandant." Under him were Wuchert, captain of reserve, in charge of the Bitapaka defences, with 8 white men and 60 natives (this force was known by the code name of "Bebra"[29]); Mayer, lieutenant in the active army, in charge of the Herbertshöhe district, with 10 whites and 140 natives (known as the "Lüttich" force), and a detached party of 2 whites and 6 natives under a naval reserve officer at Raluana; and Fiebig, lieutenant of reserve, at Paparatava behind Toma with, apparently, 10 whites and 24 natives (the "Samoa" force). There were small cannon at Toma and at Tobera behind Bitapaka, and a few detached men at outlying spots.



[29] This code name caused much confusion at the time and long afterwards, since German documents referred to the big wireless station indifferently as "Bitapaka" and "Bebra," and so produced the illusion that there were two permanent plants. *Cf. p. 80.*

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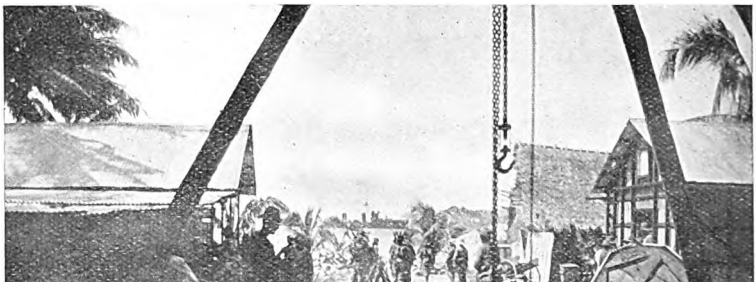
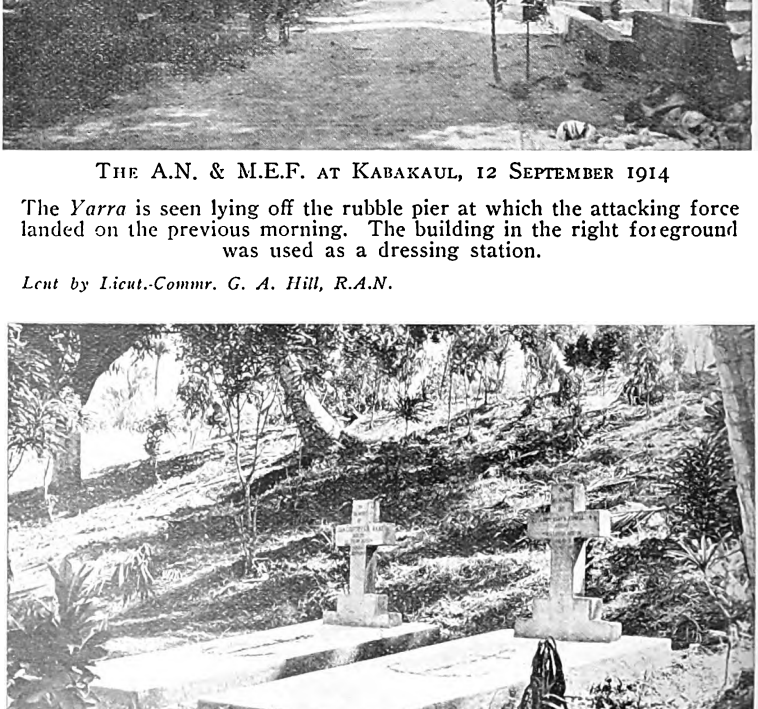


THE A.N. & M.E.F. AT KABAKAUL, 12 SEPTEMBER 1914

The *Yarra* is seen lying off the rubble pier at which the attacking force landed on the previous morning. The building in the right foreground was used as a dressing station.

Lent by Lieut.-Commr. G. A. Hill, R.A.N.



THE GRAVES OF LIEUTENANT-COMMANDER ELWELL AND ABLE SEAMAN COURTNEY AT KABAKAUL

The remains of these two Australians were in 1919 removed to the military cemetery at Rabaul.

To face p. 93.

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This disposition of troops shows what the Germans had expected. Rabaul was frankly abandoned, if the Australians chose to occupy it: but occupation was not anticipated. It was obviously the wireless station that the invaders were eager to destroy, and the road they would naturally take ran from Herbertshöhe; therefore the main strength of the defence was concentrated outside that township, and the Kabakaul road was blocked by a force less than half as strong. The prompt landing of Australian troops at Kabakaul surprised von Klewitz, and the news that 800 men had landed—a statement which he could not verify or prove false, because before he received it the telephone line from Kabakaul to Herbertshöhe had been cut—made him despair; his whole force (or, rather, such fragments of it as were still under discipline and could be reached) was withdrawn to Toma, and preparations were made for a further retirement westwards into the Taulil country.

While these active military operations were in progress, the formal procedure of surrender was not lost sight of. At 7 a.m. on the 11th Admiral Patey sent ashore a letter[30] addressed to "The Governor, Rabaul"[31] (meaning apparently the Governor of German New Guinea). He demanded that wireless communication with any other enemy force should cease, pointed out that resistance to the occupying troops would only cause unnecessary bloodshed, required information about any mines that might have been laid in Blanche Bay, and asked for the surrender of "the town of Rabaul and the dependencies under your control."

This letter had to be sent inland, as the Governor was at Toma, ten miles away, and it was 6 in the evening before an answer was received. Governor Haber—like the Governor at Apia and the District Officer at Nauru—refused to surrender, on the ground that his commission gave him no authority to do so; only the Kaiser himself could authorise a surrender in form. He assured the admiral that no mines had been laid, and that in the municipal districts of Rabaul and Herbertshöhe

[30] This and other official documents are given in full in *Appendix No. 30.*

[31] The copies of this letter in the official records show "Herbertshöhe." Patey was under the impression that Herbertshöhe was still the capital, and cited it as such in later documents. It appears possible that the draft of this first letter was altered, before final typing, by some member of the staff who was aware that Rabaul was now the capital.

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no defences had been prepared and no resistance would be offered. He hoped that the occupation of these places would be peaceful, and that the local authorities would be allowed to maintain order; this last request was obviously made in view of a possible native or Chinese rising. On the other hand he practically charged the admiral with opening hostilities while negotiations were in progress; this, he said, forced him to abstain from control of wireless communications, and made it impossible to discuss a *modus vivendi* during the state of war thus set up.[32] The admiral's reply to this letter, dated on the 12th, ends his connection with the occupation of Rabaul. He pointed out that hostilities had begun mainly because the Governor had so thoroughly cut himself off from communication with the coast; hostile action could hardly be suspended while eleven hours were being occupied in getting an answer from a place only ten miles away. The technically correct but quibbling statement as to the undefended state of Herbertshöhe he politely treated as a genuine mistake on the Governor's part; and he intimated that any future communications must be addressed to Colonel Holmes, who was taking over the administration of the Territory.

The admiral, indeed, was anxious to be gone. His light cruisers were by Admiralty orders due in Port Jackson on the 22nd, to refit for convoy duties, and the *Australia* was to sail with them in charge of the convoy at the end of the month. By that time all the ships must be coaled, the light cruisers (both of which had been for six months continuously at sea) must have been docked for a temporary overhaul, and the organisation and sailing orders of the convoy must be completed. He had to leave Rabaul at latest by the 15th; and punctually at noon on that day the *Australia* steamed out of Blanche Bay. The *Melbourne* was already on her way south; on the 13th she had been sent off with the *Warrego* to Käwieng

[32] The wiliness of this reply must be noted. Haber assumes that a *modus vivendi* during the war is all that could be contemplated, *i.e.*, that there could be no taking possession of the colony, but only retention of the ports to prevent use of them by German warships. He further gives assurances concerning the two municipal districts which are exactly true of them, and entirely misleading if applied to any territory outside them. Herbertshöhe itself was undefended and peacefully occupied; but just outside it (at Raluana on the one side, Vunapope on the other, and Paparatava inland) bodies of defending troops had been stationed. The preparations for defence of the wireless station have already been described.

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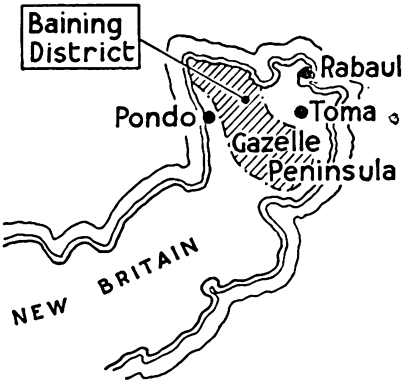
at the western end of New Ireland, on a rumour that the *Geier* and the *Prinz Eitel Friedrich* were sheltering there and the latter completing her crew from the *Komet*. The *Geier*, it appeared, had been there, but had left on the 7th; the other vessel had not been heard of, and the *Komet* neither was nor had been anywhere near the place. So the *Warrego* returned to Rabaul, taking with her a little Government yacht, the *Nusa;* the *Melbourne* made directly for Sydney.

The *Sydney* had also been scouting on the track of rumours. Information received on the 14th from an apparently reliable source hinted that the German Governor and all his forces were retiring along a newly-made 90-mile road from Toma to Pondo on the western coast of the Gazelle Peninsula, in order to embark on the *Komet* and take refuge in Friedrich Wilhelm Harbour. The *Sydney* therefore hastened to that coast and searched every little harbour along it for thirty miles, but without result. In fact there was no such road; nor was the *Komet* anywhere in the neighbourhood; nor could any white force at that time have made its way across a rough belt of country inhabited by hostile tribes. But the settlement was full of rumours of the wildest kind, many spread by people who should have known better; the Australian forces were moving amid mysteries, unmapped jungles and reefs half-charted, white men their enemies and blacks of a type never met before; some precautions must be taken, however little one believed the information that was so plentiful. It is hardly a matter for wonder that men who had passed through this experience were inclined later on to overdo their incredulity.



Her scouting completed, the *Sydney* followed hard on the *Australia's* heels towards Port Jackson.

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The situation at this moment is summed up in a telegram sent by Admiral Patey to the Admiralty on the 14th:—

Sailing 15th September with *Australia, Melbourne, Sydney* for Sydney preparatory to convoy duty to Aden, *Encounter* being left at Simpsonhafen with flotilla and auxiliaries. When brigadier considers he can spare troops, propose *Encounter Montcalm* transports and destroyers occupy Friedrich Wilhelmshafen, New Guinea. Reply immediately if there is any objection to *Montcalm's* being with this expedition, as in my absence he will be senior officer. French admiral might be asked to destroy W/T station at Angaur, but without *Montcalm* consider that *Encounter* will require support of a ship from China. Not sufficient troops to occupy any other place. Considerable opposition at Friedrich Wilhelmshafen most probable. After this consider it very desirable that China Fleet should assist with *Montcalm* and *Dupleix* in search for enemy's ships.

The *Montcalm,* in pursuance of her orders to continue cooperation with the Australian ships, had rejoined them at Rabaul on the 15th. The occupation of Friedrich Wilhelm Harbour,[33] the chief settlement on the mainland of German New Guinea, had been urged upon the Admiralty by the Commonwealth Government a few days before; but the admiral did not think it safe for troops to be voyaging among the German islands while German warships might be in the neighbourhood and the situation at Rabaul was still unsettled. His anxiety in this connection is evident both from his direct appeal to the China Squadron to send some ships to assist the *Encounter,* as "everything points to continued pressure[34] of German ships to the north-eastward of New Britain among the Carolines and Marshall Islands,"[35] and from a note of his pleasure at hearing that the *Minotaur, Ibuki,* and *Chikuma* were to leave Singapore for Rabaul on the 18th.

One tragic episode of this period remains to be narrated. At 7 a.m. on the 14th the *Parramatta* from Herbertshöhe and the *AE 1* from Rabaul left Blanche Bay together to patrol off Cape Gazelle. At 2.30 p.m. they were in communication, and at 3.30 the submarine was seen to the south-west of Duke of York Island, apparently on her way back into harbour. As that was exactly what she should be doing just then, no further notice was taken of her. The destroyer stayed out in St.

[33] Now called Madang.

[34] "Pressure" is probably a mistake for "presence." The word "and" should possibly be inserted after "New Britain."

[35] A signal (from the *Prinz Eitel Friedrich*) had been intercepted directing the collier *Tannenfels* to a rendezvous in 0° 140′ E., just north of New Guinea.

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George's Channel a while longer, and made Herbertshöhe in the sharply falling tropical twilight. At 8 p.m. the submarine had not returned. The *Parramatta* and *Yarra* were at once sent off to search for her, using flares and searchlights; the *Sydney,* which left shortly afterwards on her way to the west coast, had instructions to keep a lookout. In the morning the *Encounter* joined in the search; the *Warrego,* on her way back from Käwieng (to which place she had accompanied the *Melbourne*), took a hand; motor and steam launches were commandeered from Rabaul and Herbertshöhe, and the coasts of New Ireland and New Britain and all neighbouring waters were investigated for thirty miles and more. But no trace of the *AE 1*—not even the tell-tale shimmer of escaping oil on the water—was found, or has been since that time. Her commander, Lieutenant-Commander Besant,[30] was one of the most skilful and alert of the submarine officers of the day. His fate, which was also that of 2 other officers and 32 men—about half of them Australians and half British—is still unknown.

Rumour at once became busy with the tragedy. It is unnecessary to state in detail the various stories—usually ascribed to a "bluejacket on leave"—with which readers of the press were regaled. But they all agreed in ascribing the loss to "German treachery," and that ascription is contradicted by all the evidence. Out of many hypotheses the least improbable is that the *AE 1* dived for practice in the ordinary course when nearing the mouth of Blanche Bay, and came up so close to the coastal reef—which there forms a precipitous, if not overhanging, edge to the deep entrance channel—that her thin steel plates were cut through by the coral rock. The objection to this hypothesis is that no traces of oil were found; whether that objection is insuperable must be left to technical experts.

V

As we have already seen, Admiral Patey on the 12th handed over to Colonel Holmes the further operations in German New Guinea. From that time, therefore, they become a part of

[30] Lieut.-Commr. T. F. Besant; R.N.; b. Liverpool, Eng., 22 Dec., 1883. Lost in submarine *AE 1*, 14 Sept., 1914.

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military history, and are fully dealt with in Volume X of this series. Nevertheless, if we are to understand the naval operations still to be narrated, a short summary must be given of the negotiations by which New Britain and the other German possessions in the Pacific were practically handed over to British occupation.

During the afternoon of the 12th the *Berrima* left her anchorage off Herbertshöhe, and tied up at the Rabaul pier at about 6 o'clock. The allotted garrison—four infantry companies, a machine-gun section, and a company of Naval Reserves—occupied the settlement without opposition, seized the Government offices, and hauled down all enemy flags. Herbertshöhe was garrisoned by the troops already landed there—four companies of Naval Reserves, two infantry companies, a machine-gun section, and a detachment of the A.A.M.C. On that day, also, Colonel Holmes sent to Governor Haber a formal demand for the surrender of the colony. Next day the occupation was formally proclaimed and the Australian flag hoisted in the presence of the whole Australian force, naval and military, and a large number of friendly natives. That afternoon the Governor's reply was received; it merely reiterated his inability to surrender German soil, and incidentally let it be known that he had left Toma for some place farther inland in the Baining district.[37] To clear up the situation, troops under Colonel Watson were sent off towards Toma from Herbertshöhe early on the 14th, the *Encounter* aiding their advance by shelling a ridge where opposition was expected. Instead of opposition, however, the troops were met by a flag of truce, and it was arranged that Governor Haber should meet Colonel Holmes at 11 a.m. on the 15th. A long discussion on that day, supplemented by further parleys on the 17th, resulted in the drawing up and signing of terms of capitulation. The essential points of the capitulation (whose terms are given in full in Volume X) were:—Haber persisted that he had no authority to surrender any territory, but in view of the overwhelming Australian forces was prepared to guarantee that no resistance should be offered to any occupation of any part of "German

[37] The mountainous region that stretches south-eastward from Cape Lambert three-quarters of the way across the Gazelle Peninsula.

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New Guinea." The German and native forces still at large would surrender themselves, officers of the German Army being treated as prisoners of war, while other officers and all the men (who, Haber guaranteed, were not soldiers and had regular civil employment) would be set free to return into private life on taking an oath of neutrality. German local officials would either be retained under British supervision or deported to Australia; but the deportees, and Haber himself, would be allowed to return to Germany as soon as possible.

Apart from the last provision, which caused much controversy, the most notable one was the first. "German New Guinea" was an official title denoting all the Pacific Islands under German control, Samoa alone excepted. Haber's promise therefore covered the Marshalls and Carolines, as well as New Guinea proper and the Bismarck Archipelago. Coupling this knowledge with the vague and incorrect description of the capitulations as a "surrender of German New Guinea," some writers still assert that the northern Pacific Islands were surrendered to Australia and should therefore be handed over by Japan to her care. A Japanese offer to hand them (or some of them) over, and the reasons why it was withdrawn, are discussed later in this volume[38]; but it must be explicitly stated at once that the Haber-Holmes document gives Australia no rights of the kind. Surrender of territory was deliberately refused; all that Haber did was to guarantee non-resistance to any forces occupying the islands, and that provision would apply as much to a Japanese force as to an Australian.

A summary of the capitulations was wirelessed to Admiral Patey, who reported them with the comment: "I have not interfered with any of these arrangements, as I consider them to be entirely within the province of the Brigadier—and it was too late, even had I wished to."[39]

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[38] *See pp. 130-37.*

[39] This does not mean that Admiral Patey in any way disapproved of the terms. In a letter to Holmes he said: "I have no doubt that the future will prove the correctness of your opinion."

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CHAPTER IV

THE *AUSTRALIA* AND THE GERMAN SQUADRON

AT 10 p.m. on the 17th of September, just before he received Colonel Holmes's message, Admiral Patey was steaming back to Australia, with the *Melbourne* 150 miles ahead of him; the *Sydney* had caught him up that afternoon. The protection of Rabaul had been entrusted to the French cruiser *Montcalm*. By midnight the whole situation was turned upside down.

On the 10th of September the *Emden* had begun her meteoric career by capturing the *Pontoporos* in the Bay of Bengal. At dawn on the 14th the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* had suddenly appeared out of a clear ocean off Apia—which place they found occupied by New Zealanders—and they had left again in a few hours, steering north-west. At last the enemy ships were located, and just where they were likely to be most dangerous. Enemy cruisers going west from Samoa on the 14th might be anywhere off the New Zealand or the Australian coast by the time contingents were ready to sail. A cruiser already at work in the Bay of Bengal must be destroyed before any convoys could safely traverse the Indian Ocean.

Consequently, late in the evening of the 17th, Admiral Patey was reading the following telegram from the Admiralty:—

> Situation changed by appearance of *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* at Samoa on 14th September and *Emden* in Bay of Bengal. *Australia* and *Montcalm* to cover *Encounter* and expeditionary force from attack, and then search for the two cruisers. *Melbourne* to be used at Rear-Admiral's discretion. *Sydney* to return for convoy of Australian troops to Aden.
>
> *Hampshire* and *Yarmouth* to sink *Emden*. *Minotaur* to arrive at Fremantle by 4th October for Australian convoy; one Japanese cruiser to accompany *Minotaur*.

It so happened that the *Melbourne*, which was at the moment a good deal nearer Sydney, was in need of slight repairs. Admiral Patey therefore took upon himself to interchange her part with that of the *Sydney*, left her to go on to Australia for convoy duties, and took the *Sydney* back with him post-haste to Rabaul, which he reached at 4.30 p.m. on the 19th. He found that the *Yarra*, while searching the Duke of York

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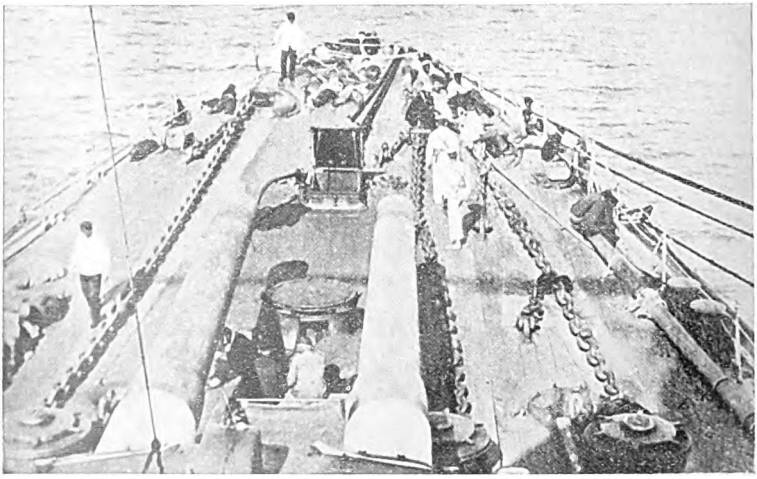
MADANG (FRIEDRICH WILHELM HARBOUR)



GERMAN PRISONERS FROM THE *Eleonore Woermann* ON BOARD H.M.A.S. *Australia*, DECEMBER 1914

Taken by Stoker Petty Officer A. T. H. Lemon, R.A.N.
Aust. War Memorial Collection No. EN212.

To face p. 101.

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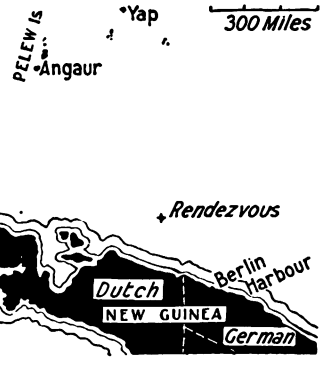
group for traces of *AE 1*, had damaged her propellers; the *Encounter* with two destroyers had carried out a further scrutiny of the Pondo-Port Powell coast-line; two small captured steamers, the *Sumatra* and *Nusa*, had been commissioned and manned from the *Berrima's* crew; otherwise things were *in statu quo*.[1]

The *Australia* and *Encounter*, with the *Montcalm*, were obviously a strong enough support for the intended expedition to the New Guinea mainland. It thus became possible at last to carry out the destruction of the wireless station at Angaur; and on the 21st the *Sydney* was detached to that island, with directions to visit, both on her way out and when returning, a German rendezvous to the north of Dutch New Guinea whose exact position, ascertained from an intercepted wireless message, was in lat. 0°, long. 140° E. She therefore coasted along German New Guinea, looked in at Berlin Harbour (which was empty), passed the rendezvous (also empty), and reached Angaur on the 26th. The settlement there was left undisturbed; a landing-party went ashore on the eastern coast, just under the wireless station, and thoroughly destroyed the engines and fittings, while leaving the aerial and mast intact. The station seemed to have been out of use for some time. The *Sydney's* return voyage was equally uneventful; wireless signals were intercepted from two German auxiliary cruisers—probably the *Komet* and *Prinz Eitel Friedrich*, which were about that time in the vicinity—but there was no time to look for them. On the 30th she rejoined the *Australia* at Rabaul.



In the interval the area of occupied territory had been greatly extended. On the 12th the Australian Government had urged the early occupation of the mainland of German

[1] On the 20th Admiral Patey received news of his promotion, and broke the flag of a Vice-Admiral accordingly.

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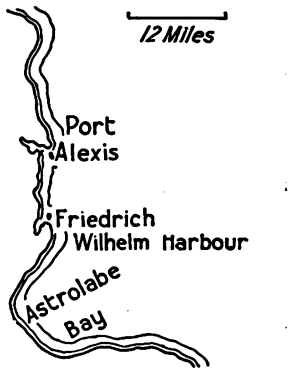
New Guinea, and the Admiralty had agreed to the necessary measures as soon as Rabaul was secured. The capitulations once completed, Colonel Holmes was eager to seize the mainland territory, especially as a small body of troops from Friedrich Wilhelm Harbour had reached New Britain on the 20th and had been included in the general surrender next day. On the 22nd, therefore, at 9.30 a.m. the *Australia, Montcalm,* and *Encounter* escorted the *Berrima* from Rabaul to the mainland port, which was reached at daylight on the 24th. No opposition being offered, the flag was hoisted, a garrison (consisting of a half-company of Naval Reserves and one-and-a-half companies of infantry) was landed, and the occupation was formally proclaimed by 4.30 p.m. By the afternoon of the 26th the four ships were back at Rabaul. In making this expedition the admiral certainly took a risk, since it was just possible that the big German cruisers might visit Rabaul in his absence. But at farthest he was less than a day's journey away; Rabaul was defended by three destroyers, a submarine, the *Protector,* and four other armed vessels; and the anchorage at Simpson Harbour was such that an enemy must come right into the harbour, laying himself open to all sorts of minor attacks, before he could do any damage either to the ships lying there or to the settlement. Moreover, the events at Apia showed that the Germans were not eager to attack occupied territory.



All the tasks laid on the Australian Squadron by the Admiralty had now been accomplished, except the convoying of the contingent for Europe, for which, according to the latest plans, other arrangements were yet to be made. Admiral Patey was therefore again free to consider the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* as his immediate objective. Last seen off Apia on the 14th, they might on the 30th—by which time the *Australia* was again ready for sea—be anywhere in the Pacific between

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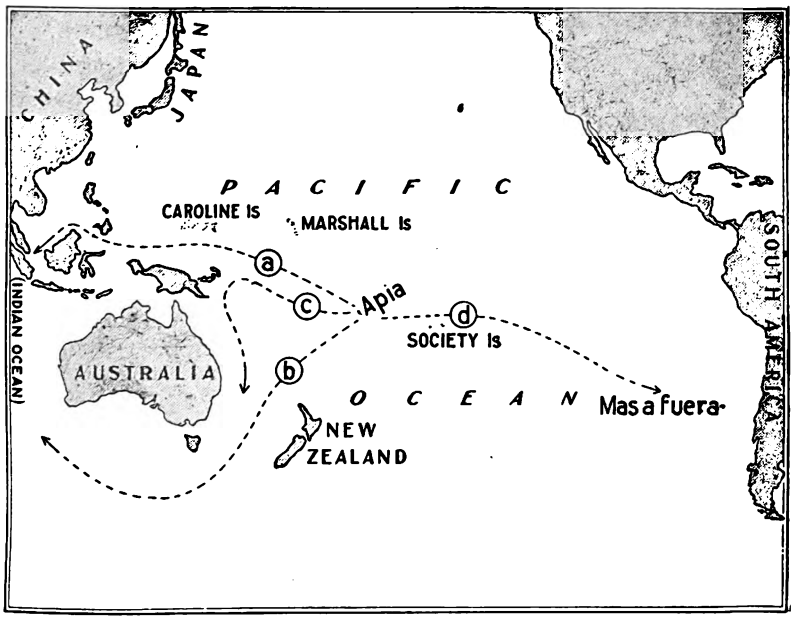
South America and Australia. In all probability they were not in the Marshalls or Carolines, for two Japanese squadrons were at work in those groups. But they might intend—(*a*) to reach the Indian Ocean *viâ* Malaysia, (*b*) to reach it round the south of Australia, (*c*) to operate in Australasian waters, (*d*) to make for the coast of South America and thence reach the South Atlantic. Maintaining his earlier



view the admiral believed that they would take the fourth course, but felt unable to act definitely on that belief until he received confirming evidence. If, however, they had turned northwards from Apia towards their own ports, and had found the Japanese there, they would probably try to get past those squadrons on the south, and might thus evade them if not intercepted. Accordingly, after conference with Admiral Huguet, he left Rabaul northwards on the 1st of October with the *Australia, Montcalm, Sydney,* and *Encounter,* hoping before long to pick up wireless signals from a Japanese squadron and arrange co-operation. Signals were

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heard the same evening; but the Japanese ships did not reply to the *Australia's* messages, and communication was not established.[2]

This proved, however, to be of no importance. Just after midnight a message received from the Naval Board informed the admiral that the German cruisers had again been located. On the 22nd of September they had raided the harbour of Papeete in the French Society Islands, and on leaving it had steered north-eastwards. This confirmed his own view, especially as other news came that two German light cruisers (the *Leipzig* and *Dresden*) were cruising off the South American coast. But the Admiralty reasoned otherwise.[3] Their orders, which were received by Patey on the 3rd of October at Rabaul, whither he had immediately returned to wait for instructions, were as follows:—

> It is very probable that *Gneisenau* and *Scharnhorst* may repeat attack similar to that at Papeete; therefore they may be expected to return towards Samoa, Fiji, or even New Zealand. Make Suva your headquarters, search for these cruisers in those waters, and leave Simpsonshafen as soon as possible to search.

It seemed very unlikely that the Germans would double back in that way; if they did so, he would have preferred Noumea rather than Suva as his new base. But Suva was farther on the way to South America, and at any rate the squadron was set free for its real work. Before midnight, therefore, the *Australia, Montcalm,* and *Sydney* happily left Blanche Bay for Suva, and were followed next day by the *Encounter, Warrego, Parramatta, AE 2,* and four supply-ships. The *Berrima* returned to Sydney with the *Yarra, Protector,* and *Fantome;* and by the afternoon of the 4th only the hospital ship *Grantala* (also under orders for Suva) was left in Simpson Harbour.

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[2] In a despatch to the French Minister of Marine, Admiral Huguet remarks that Admiral Patey appeared to him to be worried and anxious in consequence of his inability to communicate with the Japanese ships.

[3] It is fair to add that two very misleading pieces of information were received at the same time. An American schooner reported having sighted a German cruiser off Manua in the Samoan group on the 29th of September (this was pure imagination); and a British vessel, the *Southport,* brought news indirectly from Jaluit that on the 15th the whole German Pacific Squadron was in the Marshalls, with colliers and storeships. This was, of course, true of a date fifteen days earlier, but false as stated.

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II

It is now time to take up again the story of the German squadron from its unexpected appearance off Apia on the 14th of September. It was the press news brought by the *Nürnberg* concerning the occupation of Samoa by the New Zealanders, together with observation of the wireless traffic "in which about the beginning of the month the *Australia* played a considerable rôle,"[4] that suggested to von Spee the making of this descent. He conjectured that the *Australia* had escorted the occupying force, and that merchant vessels required for the maintenance of the new garrison would still be lying off Apia, presumably with warships to protect them. "An attack before daybreak upon the ships lying at anchor," he noted, "promises results." Although the enterprise would take him more than 1,600 miles to the south-west—that is towards Australia, and partly back upon his squadron's course—his coal supply sufficed. He therefore determined upon it, and explained the plan to his captains at a conference on September 8th at Christmas Island. "Count Spee (says the official German narrative)[5] believed that without endangering the carrying out of his orders to wage cruiser-war he might run the risk of a surprise attack in the grey light of morning against ships lying at anchor—even if the battle-cruiser *Australia* was among them—a supposition which was confirmed by the observation of wireless traffic in good time before the attack."

The enterprise would appease the desire of the crews to come to grips with their enemy, but there was, of course, no intention to retake the islands. If the *Australia* was present, an attempt was to be made by surprise in the early morning to torpedo her, the other ships being engaged by gunfire at the longest effective range (9,000 metres). If she was absent, the attack would be delivered at a later hour. Only the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* were to take part in the raid, all the colliers except one being left with the *Nürnberg* at Christmas Island, with orders to proceed a week later to join the armoured cruisers at the Marquesas, 1,500 miles south-east of Christmas Island. The other collier, to supply an earlier need, was to wait for von Spee at the Suwarrow group, some 600 miles to the east of Samoa.

[4] [5] *Der Kreuzerkrieg, vol. I, p. 130.*

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The *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*, after transferring to the colliers all their boats except two apiece, left Christmas Island on September 9th and, having practised their plan of attack on the 12th, reached Samoa on the night of the 13th. By that time observation of the wireless traffic indicated that the *Australia* had left Apia, and their action was therefore now based upon this assumption. Before dawn on the 14th they took up separate positions off the coast with the object of intercepting any vessels that might attempt to escape from Apia; but at daybreak it was found that the only vessel in harbour was a three-masted American schooner.[6] The Union Jack was flying on the government buildings, and around them and also near some tents in the open were a few figures in khaki. Any attempt to land was out of the question—the cruisers had only two boats each, the strength of the New Zealanders was unknown, and in any case a landing could effect no permanent occupation and would merely cripple the cruisers for their proper service of commerce destruction. "I refrained," notes von Spee,[7] "from ordering a bombardment of the houses by which were a few groups of people—conjectured to be soldiers—or of the three tents, because natives with women were everywhere standing among them."[8] The wireless mast was too distant (over 10,000 metres) to be bombarded with useful result, and he therefore left Apia, contenting himself with "jamming" for the rest of the day the wireless signals by which the New Zealanders attempted to report the raid. Off the north-west coast of Upolu he stopped to pick up two Germans who had put off in a boat to give him information, and who offered to guide a landing party against the garrison. The offer was at once refused, and at midday the squadron continued its course, first to the west and then to the north-west, changing after dark to the east. It was noted by listening

[6] Had the *Australia* been at Apia it is unlikely that she would have been caught napping. (For precautions taken when she was there *see p. 61.*)

[7] *See Der Kreuzerkrieg, vol. I, p. 132.*

[8] This was in consonance with the attitude of this chivalrous commander throughout. When two months later, at a fête given by the German colony at Valparaiso, the toast "damnation to the British Navy" was proposed, von Spee refused to drink it, and later endeavoured to escape from similar celebrations in honour of his victory at Coronel.

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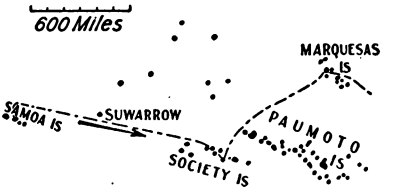
to the wireless that a transport with New Zealand reinforcements, of whose pending approach the two Germans had informed von Spee, was being recalled to Suva.[9]

The German commander now made for the Suwarrow group to meet his collier. The strict lookout hitherto maintained was to some extent relaxed, experience having shown that timely notice of the approach of enemy ships could be obtained by observing their wireless signals. Suwarrow was reached on the 17th, and the cruisers recovered their boats, but the weather prevented them from coaling.



The German admiral here determined upon another enterprise, a raid upon Tahiti in the Society Islands, which lay about 1,000 miles to the east, only slightly to the south of his course back to the Marquesas. The attack offered promise of obtaining coal and fresh provisions, and the possibility of meeting the French cruisers. It might also prove disturbing to the Canadian-Australian mail service, one of whose liners, the *Moana,* was believed to be due at Papeete on September 28th. "I intend," said von Spee in his orders,[10] "to sink any enemy warships which may be found in Tahiti, commandeer coal, and requisition food supplies.[11] Forcible measures in case the demand for food supplies is not complied with. The targets will be, first—positions from which the enemy opens fire; then—defended works, arsenal, public buildings, &c. Allotment of targets

[9] On the evening of September 15th the governor of Fiji was told by his wireless expert that German warships were talking to each other not much more than 200 miles away. (The actual distance of the two cruisers appears to have been about 1,000 miles.) He accordingly sent *en clair* a message to the *Australia:* "Shall expect you to-morrow at daylight." It was hoped that this might scare away the enemy; from a statement afterwards published in Chile it was afterwards conjectured that this "bluff" had possibly effected its object: "We picked up a wireless signal one day," wrote an officer of the *Scharnhorst,* "which led us to believe that a strong squadron was handy . . . we turned away from our original course." The facts set out in the German official narrative, however, render it most unlikely that a descent upon Fiji was contemplated by von Spee.

[10] *Der Kreuzerkrieg, vol. I, p. 134.*

[11] Admiral Dick (the German Director of Naval Dockyards) in *The Cruiser Squadron, Its Formation, Victory, and End,* compiled in 1917, states that the objects of the raid were to obtain "provisions, cattle, clothes, money, and coal."

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according to the positions of the ships. Armed cutters must be ready for making the requisitions. Minesweeping gear to be kept clear for use."

Accordingly the two cruisers proceeded with their collier to Bora-Bora in the Society group, and there, tricking the French by a pretence of being British, obtained provisions—and information. The raid upon Papeete was carried out next day (September 22nd). Unfortunately for von Spee's programme the French, as soon as they ascertained the nationality of their visitors, sank the small gunboat *Zélée,* set on fire their stock of coal, blew up the beacon towers which guided vessels into their harbour, and pluckily opened fire from a battery of guns landed previously from the *Zélée.*[12] Von Spee thereupon decided that, with the stores set on fire and the beacon towers destroyed, it was not worth while to risk a landing, and, after firing at the *Zélée* and at the shore, at once put back to sea. The German official narrative claims that the *Zélée* was sunk by the squadron's fire, but admits that this was but "a slight military success" when set against the consumption of precious coal, and of still more precious ammunition, and the fact that von Spee's opponents would now have convincing evidence of his intended withdrawal to the east.

It only remained to join the rest of the force, to coal, and to take in stores before the final withdrawal could be begun. The rendezvous was at the Marquesas, and thither, after picking up their collier, the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* steamed. During September 25th they swept in wide formation in the hope of catching the *Moana,* but she had already passed, and on the 28th her wireless was heard broadcasting the news of the bombardment of Papeete. Meanwhile the *Nürnberg,* with her four colliers, had left Christmas Island on the 15th, and on the nights of the 17th and 18th lay within wireless range of Honolulu[13] in order to pick up more clearly the press telegrams emitted by its wireless. On the night of the 24th she reported herself and convoy to have reached Nukahiva in the Marquesas. On

[12] An account of this incident summarised from that by Claude Farrère and Paul Chack (*Combats et Batailles sur Mer*) is given in *Appendix No. 14.*

[13] Honolulu lies 1,500 miles north of Fanning Island.

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the previous night the main squadron had overheard some steamer signalling in English—"four steamers, one cruiser"; but the *Nürnberg* was not aware of having been sighted. On the 24th she had requisitioned money and supplies at Taïohaé (Hakapehi) in Anna Maria Bay, and on the 26th was joined by the main squadron in Controller Bay, near by, where she had hidden her convoy.[14] The next few days were spent in coaling from these steamers, and in commandeering additional supplies from the French. During their stay in the Marquesas the Germans used no violence to any person, and disturbed the natives as little as possible, but requisitioned property, both public and private, with remarkable thoroughness. At Taïohaé they even pillaged the post-office and tore the stamps off the letters, after which they carefully re-closed the damaged envelopes. The *Gneisenau* was detached to Dominica to make requisitions there. On October 2nd, having emptied all except two of the colliers, the *Scharnhorst* and *Nürnberg* with these two put to sea, and next day joining the *Gneisenau* headed for Easter Island, nearly 2,700 miles to the south-east, whither the *Titania,* on account of her slow speed, had been despatched several days before. The ships sailed on a wide front, frequently altering course first to the northward and then to the southward, so as to cover as wide an area as possible—both for safety and in order to catch merchant vessels sailing between Australia and South America.

On the night of the 5th von Spee received from the *Dresden,*[15] still 2,500 miles to the east, news that the British South Atlantic Squadron (the *Good Hope, Monmouth, Glasgow,* and *Otranto*) had passed into the Pacific on the 28th of September, and that the Japanese cruiser *Idzumo* was still on the Mexican coast.

[14] The convoy was reported by a French gendarme as "five great colliers of heavy tonnage." Including the collier that arrived with the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau,* the merchant vessels now with the squadron were the auxiliary cruiser *Titania,* and the steamers *Yorck, Göttingen, Holsatia,* and *O.J.D. Ahlers.*

[15] The *Dresden,* which at the outbreak of war was in the West Indies, was hurried south on a cruiser raid against the South Atlantic trade-routes. Reaching the Straits of Magellan at the end of August, she heard that the British cruisers *Good Hope, Monmouth,* and *Glasgow* were on her track, and decided to enter the Pacific. The *Good Hope* tried to intercept her at Wollaston Island, but she slipped away just north of Cape Horn. At the end of September she heard that the British squadron had passed into the Pacific; knowing from earlier information that von Spee was due at the beginning of October, she made westwards to join him.

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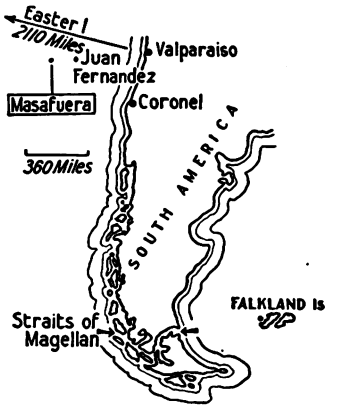
His own squadron was strengthened by the accession of the *Dresden* herself at Easter Island on the 12th, and of the *Leipzig,* which brought along some colliers on the 14th. He left that place on the 18th for Masafuera, where he was unexpectedly joined by the *Prinz Eitel Friedrich;*[16] thence at the end of October he made for the South American coast. The rest—Coronel and the Falklands—is part of a greater history than this.



As the German official historian points out, the effect of von Spee's operations upon the commerce of Germany's opponents in East Asia and Australia had been merely transitory—the result of his squadron being unlocated, a "fleet in being." The raids upon Apia and Tahiti, initiated on the chance of taking enemy warships at a disadvantage, obtaining food and coal, and inspiriting his crews, had been without result except to dispel the secrecy of his movements, and afford evidence of his intention to seek South America. The strategy of his opponents, on the other hand, is criticised as disjointed and unduly hampered by the promotion of local enterprises, such as the expeditions to Samoa and New Guinea, before concerted measures were taken to fight down the German squadron.[17] Adverse comment is passed upon the retention of the *Australia* on the defensive in the West Pacific after the withdrawal of the German squadron, it being contended that by "the mere sending of the *Australia* in October to the west coast of South America"[18] the disaster

[16] *See p. 41.*

[17] From the manner in which the forces operating against von Spee were split up, the German historian infers that Count von Spee was wrong in his earlier conclusion that the mere presence of the *Australia* would quickly force him into distant waters (*see p. 25*). If Japan had not entered the war, it is contended, there would have been good prospect of avoiding the *Australia* for a considerable time, and seriously damaging Great Britain by interference both with her commerce and with the transport of troops.

[18] *Der Kreuzerkrieg, vol. I, p. 191.*

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at Coronel might have been avoided. The German historian notices as a possibility (on the correctness of which, however, he would venture no opinion) that the purely local interests of Australia and New Zealand may have hindered the British Admiralty's freedom of action in strategy, by the refusal of these Dominions to allow their ships to leave their own waters. The facts already stated[19] are, of course, directly contrary to such a supposition, the Australian Squadron having been tied to Australasian waters against the wishes of its commander and of the Commonwealth Government[20] and by instructions from the Admiralty in London. At this juncture, indeed (on the 15th of November, 1914), the Governor-General, possibly prompted by a private letter from Admiral Patey, went so far as to transmit to the British Government the following statement of Australian views on the matter:—

> While reluctant to concern myself with naval strategy I have to report a prevailing opinion that the loss of our cruisers off the Chilean coast is the climax of a long bungle in the Pacific. As to this, as I have intimated, there is sure to be sharp discussion later on. The maxim of seeking out the enemy's ships and destroying them has been ignored. Nearly a month was wasted over Samoa; after the wireless at Simsonshafen had been destroyed the *Australia* was detained for many days in the Bismarck Archipelago; lastly, valuable time was lost cruising around Fiji. Had Admiral Patey immediately destroyed the German wireless to the north, and then sought out the enemy's ships, these would not have been left unmolested for three months—nor, in all probability, would our military expedition have been so seriously delayed. Admiral Patey at our interview in Sydney on August 2nd was insistent on the need for an immediate and unremitting chase of the *Gneisenau* and *Scharnhorst*, and I know that he has never swerved from that view.
>
> There is but one opinion here, viz., that H.M.A. Fleet, and the China Squadron also, has been singularly ineffective; and that to the remoteness of Admiralty control may be traced the concentration of German ships off Chili with its lamentable result.
>
> I have written so much on the naval situation with a view to prepare your mind for the large measure of local autonomy which is sure to be asked for when the war comes to an end.

III

Before passing finally from the adventures of the German ships that took part in the Pacific naval campaign of 1914, it

[19] *See also section IV of this chapter.*

[20] *See pp. 48-9 and footnote 4 on p. 51.*

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may be well to deal with a number of smaller craft that frequented the Bismarck Archipelago. None of them except the *Komet* and the *Siar* are of any importance.

Three were captured during the operations that led up to the Governor's capitulation. The *Sumatra* (584 tons) was caught on the 11th of September off Cape Tawui; the *Madang* (194 tons) was intercepted by the *Protector* off Herbertshöhe two days later, and was afterwards used as a Government yacht by the Australian Administrator. These two belonged to private German companies; the *Nusa,* a little sixty-tonner, which the *Warrego* found at Käwieng on the 14th, was a German official yacht. Some days later, on the 23rd, the *Parramatta* discovered two vessels well hidden up a creek on Duke of York Island—the North German boat *Meklong* (438 tons), and a motor-launch, the *Brass Monkey,* which belonged to the Wesleyan Mission but had been commandeered to act as tender to the *Meklong.* The concealment of these vessels was extremely well done. Reports had come in that a small steamer was hidden in Mioko Harbour, and destroyers on several occasions looked for her and saw nothing; in the end the *Parramatta* anchored within fifty yards of the *Meklong* without seeing her, and it was only when a landing-party approached her hiding-place from landward that she was discovered. The capture of the *Samoa* (300 tons) by the *Madang* on the west coast of New Britain, and of a couple of Government ketches and a motor-launch at Rabaul, completes the list of these small craft, apart from the events now to be narrated.

The *Siar,* a 450-ton steamer belonging to the New Guinea Company, played a more active part in the German defence. Before the war she was used for taking provisions to the company's plantations along the coasts of New Guinea, New Britain, and the outlying islands, and was at Rabaul, taking in stores, towards the end of June. From that time until the 14th of September[21] no information is available concerning her, except that on the 19th of August she coaled the *Komet,* as will be told later. On the 14th of September she reappears

[21] Her log for that period was captured, but is now missing.

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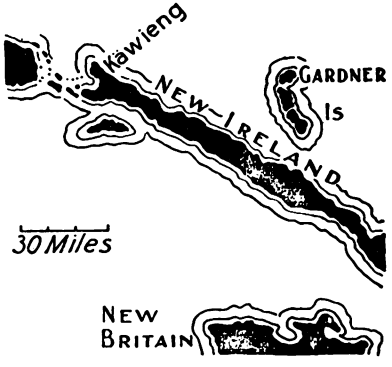
off the southern end of Celebes, making for Makassar. She had on board Herr Taifert, the general manager of the New Guinea Company, and had been sent to the Archipelago to fetch down rice and other stores for the company's plantations, which would otherwise be dependent on the Australian authorities at Rabaul.[22] She was at Makassar, loading up, from the 16th to the 21st; then she made back in a hurry to Eitape on the New Guinea coast, a station which had not yet been occupied by the Australian forces. Discharging part of her cargo there on the 4th of October, she next ran east through the Admiralty group to Käwieng on the western end of New Ireland, whose intricate harbour she used as a dépôt from which planters were supplied all along the coast. Then she went into hiding.

But she had been over-daring. A launch carrying part of her cargo for distribution to plantations in New Guinea was seen discharging stores at Vunapaka on the north coast of New Britain. Colonel Holmes at once saw a connection between this arrival of smuggled provisions and the sudden reluctance of German merchants to buy Australian provisions. Taifert, who had landed at Vunapaka, was arrested, and owned that he had brought goods in; and documents found in his possession indicated that the smugglers' vessel was not far from Käwieng. Forthwith the *Nusa* with a military force was sent to Käwieng, where the flag was hoisted and occupation formally proclaimed; hints were obtained that the missing ship would be found in the Gardner group, about seventy miles to the eastward, and on the 18th the *Nusa* made a fine haul, which included both the *Siar* herself and her two motor-schooners, the *Matupi* and *Senta*.



[22] Her capture was in the end due to suspicions aroused because certain Rabaul merchants, having petitioned Colonel Holmes to send to Australia for stores for them, refused to buy the stores when they reached Rabaul. In the meantime the *Siar* had returned from Makassar.

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The ship whose adventures have still to be told, and whose name has already been several times mentioned in the foregoing narrative, played a still more important rôle in the German defence of their South Sea possessions. The *Komet* was originally a yacht belonging to the administration of German New Guinea, not intended for war service; but shortly after the outbreak of war she was, by direction of the German Government, handed over to the naval authorities, and became a warship. Owing to the circumstances of her capture, her log-books, bridge-books, and wireless diary are in the possession of the Australian Navy Office; and from these it is possible not only to ascertain her position almost day by day until she was captured, but also to throw some light on the movements of other German vessels, and of German officials during the critical moments in the South Sea campaign.

It seems clear that the war warning of the 11th of July[23] was not passed on to the authorities of German New Guinea. On the 12th the *Komet* (then belonging to the local administration) was cruising round Bougainville Island, carrying troops for a punitive expedition on Buka. On the 17th these troops were brought back to Herbertshöhe, and on the 20th the Governor with an escort of other troops (probably native police) embarked for Morobe on Adolf Haven in New Guinea. Landing him there for an expedition which took some three weeks, the *Komet* proceeded to cruise along the coast between Adolf Haven and Friedrich Wilhelm Harbour.

Before the 5th of August no one in the *Komet* was at all worried about war in the Pacific. Till the 25th of July her wireless picked up casual messages in French, English, and German; even the *Scharnhorst* was still using plain language. On the 26th, however, long cypher messages from the German station at Yap to the *Scharnhorst* and the *Planet* began to fill the air, followed by:

> From Yap to officer commanding *Scharnhorst*. Look out for important news about 3 o'clock. . . . Please pay great attention to our 820-millimetre wave. . . . More news at 9 o'clock.

Then the *Scharnhorst* talked to the Governor at Apia, probably telling him that the squadron's expected visit to Samoan

[23] *See p. 25.*

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waters was abandoned; and then came a rush of long screeds of press news about Serbia and the Russian mobilisation and Parisian "bluffing" press-matter (*bluff-artikel*). But next day the diary records mainly normal messages—rice shortage in Nauru, orders for surveys on the Waria and Markham rivers in New Guinea, the supply of glass tubes for accumulators, and so on. For the next few days messages in naval cypher to the German squadron from Yap alternate with peaceful matter; on the 30th, mixed up with some signals from or to the *Themistocles,* came a queer fragment of a message from Berlin, signed "Admiralität"—

. . . . and the Japanese . . . impossible to take them further from their stations. . . .

But on the 5th of August, when the *Komet* was at Friedrich Wilhelm Harbour, Nauru began calling *en clair:*

Planet Rabaul. . . . gand frrten v n august gurg krieg r r ofkumt;

then followed a flurry of unintelligible signals, interspersed with "KBN," "KBN," "APL"; then another attempt—"ugust n dw a oedgast"—and at last, at 9.10 p.m., the message came through clearly:

Planet Rabaul. Nauru für Gouverneur. England vierten August krieg erklärt. Bezirksamt.

then followed:

Berlin 15 w. Poste an Gouverneur Rabaul. Am 4 krieg mit England, Frankreich, Russland bestätigt.[24]

Even then the *Komet* remained calm. Her commander at once signalled to the *Scharnhorst,* asking for orders, but there were no signs of perturbation. All next day she was intercepting messages; Yap calling the *Scharnhorst* and the *Emden* in undecypherable naval code: long commercial telegrams in plain English ("Draft reached me Wednesday afternoon: will orderly cash, paying on Peters' account: must have later proper bill"); spasms of unintelligible interruptions from an

[24] The translation of the messages is:—

"To *Planet,* Rabaul. From Nauru for the Governor. England declared war on 4th August. District Office."

"From Berlin. News for the Governor, Rabaul. On the 4th war with England, France, Russia is confirmed."

"KBN" was Nauru's call-sign, "ALP" that of the *Planet.*

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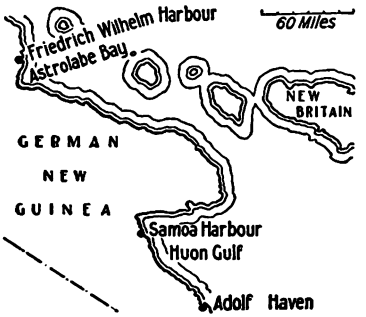
American warship. On the 7th came another Yap to Nauru message, this time in cypher, but bursting into plain language suddenly with "gestört durch Engländer" ("interrupted by the English").

That is the tale told by the wireless diary. The log is unperturbed. On the 5th it runs:—"Evening, same as yesterday"; on the 6th, "Crew usefully employed." That afternoon the *Komet* left Friedrich Wilhelm Harbour in heavy weather for Samoa Harbour, running at only four knots through the night, and stopping here and there during the next day to land passengers at coastal settlements. Not till the evening of the 8th were war precautions taken: "From to-day on," says the log, "sidelights were no longer carried, and no lights were shown in harbour." On the 11th the Governor brought his expedition back to the coast, and the troops were re-embarked. At a steady nine knots the *Komet* slipped across the strait and coasted New Britain. Suddenly in the early morning of the 12th she caught warnings from Rabaul—figure cyphers and word cyphers flung out to catch the Governor's attention—and put on speed to reach the shelter of Ablingi. She caught a last sign from the Rabaul station—"use it once more, then no more answers"—and then silence.[25] From Ablingi she crept along to Jacquinot Bay; thence in the afternoon of the 13th she put out into heavy weather, which forced her to half-speed. Just before 9 in the evening came the message "All clear, but we expect the enemy squadron back to-morrow." Her speed quickened up from five to thirteen knots while she answered:



Shall reach Kokopo early to-morrow. Tell District Officer to have coal and workmen there early and ready for work.

At 3.45 a.m. she was anchored off Matupi; before half-past 5

[25] The message intercepted by the *Sydney* (*p. 13*) seems not to have reached the *Komet*.

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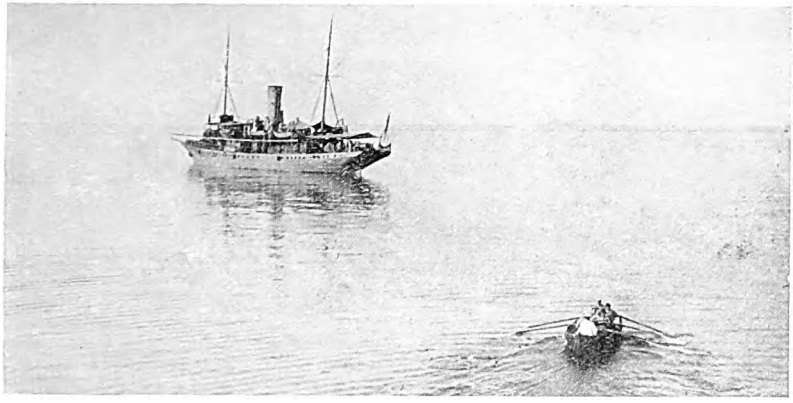
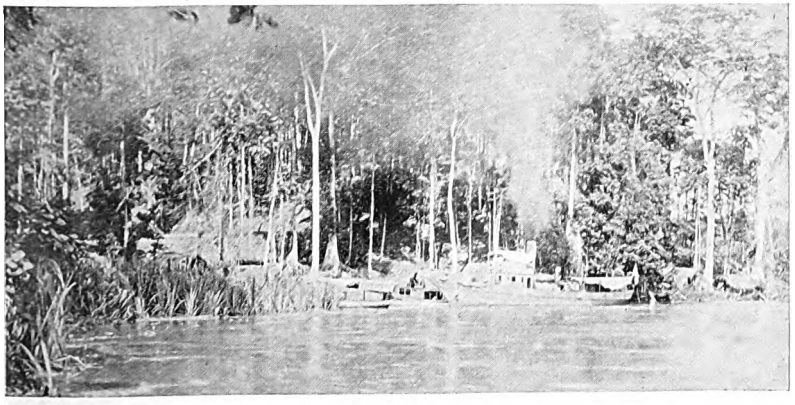


H.M.A.S. *Una* (FORMERLY THE GERMAN NAVAL YACHT *Komet*)
Photograph taken off Thursday Island in 1916.

Lent by Lieut.-Commr. G. A. Hill, R.A.N.



THE *Nusa*

Photograph taken at Malu, on the upper reaches of the Sepik River, December 1914

Lent by Petty Officer A. L. Swinden, R.A.N.

To face p. 116.

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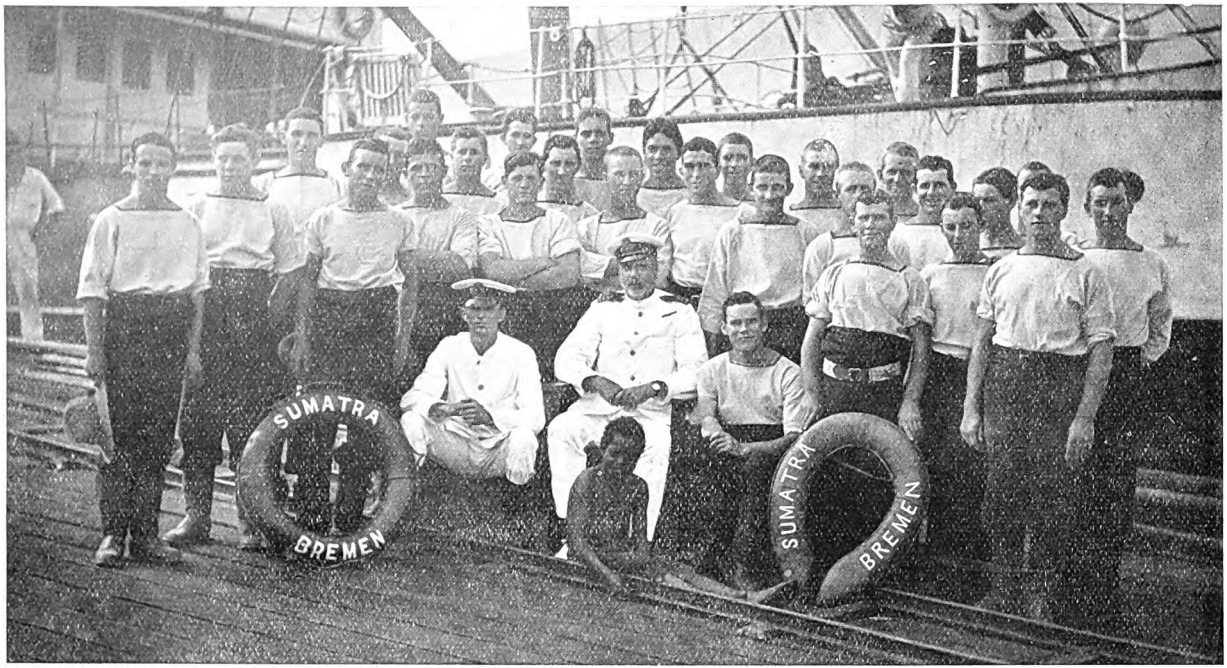

OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE NAVAL BRIGADE AT RABAUL

The officer in the centre is Commander R. S. Lambton.

Taken by W. H. Lucas, Esq.
Aust. War Memorial Collection No. J3108.

To face p. 117.

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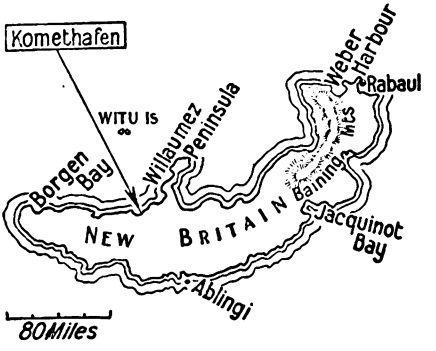
the Governor and the troops were ashore, the coal on board, the anchor up again, and she was on her way round the northern point of New Britain.

By noon on the 15th she was safely ensconced in an uncharted harbour—apparently well-known to her, and named after her in the log—at the mouth of a small river in Willaumez Peninsula. Here the crew took their "Sunday off" after their recent alarums, and on the 19th coaled her again from the *Siar*. Coaling was a frequent and tedious business; it took from the 19th to the 21st, including an all-night spell; then it began again on the 26th at midday, and lasted through the night till 6 a.m. next day.[26] Between the 21st and the 26th the *Siar* had visited Rabaul and brought back an official named Berghaus. For the next few days the *Komet* dodged about from harbour to harbour —to the Witu group, back to Komethafen, then to Borgen Bay near the western end of New Britain. Finally she was called up to Port Weber at the northern end of the Gazelle Peninsula, and apparently commissioned at last as a ship of the German Navy.



During these days of waiting her wireless had been but spasmodically supplied with news. Occasionally she caught a press message from Guam or even Tsingtao; Nauru on the 27th called her special attention to the fact that Japan had declared war; mutilated English phrases—"infectious contagious—have you any news? We have been without for two days"—show up among a medley of disconnected letters in the diary. But "Petepaka," as the operator calls the Bitapaka station, was working very badly. It apologised on the 28th. excusing itself because something had been

[26] Von Spee, we now know from German sources, had directed the use of the *Komet* to take coal to Angaur for the two raiders that he had detached at the Marshalls (*see pp. 37-41*).

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"destroyed by the Australians"; two days later Nauru complained "I can get no answer from you since yesterday." On the 1st of September Bitapaka was optimistic again—"Have shifted antennae . . . can hear you quite easily; please stay by the apparatus till you get our answers; will call you every evening at 7, or at 9 if you prefer"; but the following days produced "quite unintelligible." "You jam your letters too close together." "Signals too weak, at times fading away."

She did not reach Port Weber. Instead, she slipped into Massava Bay, farther westward, picked up Captain Genten of the Norddeutscher-Lloyd service, and went off hotfoot for Angaur. Genten's mission is not certain. The rumour at Rabaul was that he was taking over the *Komet* from Captain Möller, who, as an officer of the Naval Reserve, was to be transferred to some bigger warship; this rumour seemed at the time to confirm another, previously mentioned,[27] that the *Prinz Eitel Friedrich* was lying in Käwieng waiting to be manned from the *Komet*. Events, however, proved it false. It is not improbable that he was placed on the *Komet* to watch Möller, whose loyalty was suspected, as his wife was an Englishwoman.

At 3 p.m. on the 14th she reached Angaur; but the ship she was to meet had not made its appearance, and she put to sea again, steaming (sometimes drifting) slowly backwards and forwards. At this moment the log fails us (a page having been torn out), and the little bridge-book only carries on to 9 a.m. next day, when the *Komet* was due west of Puluchean Island. But an extant note by Commander Jackson,[28] who subsequently captured the *Komet* and appears to have seen the missing page, states that during the 15th[29] she met the auxiliary cruiser *Prinz Eitel Friedrich* off the north-west entrance of Malakal Harbour in the Pelews (about 30 miles north of Angaur), and "rendered her assistance"—*i.e.*, coaled her. From the 16th to the 24th both ships stayed at Malakal; the *Komet's* wireless operator occupied his time with intercepting all sorts of messages, at first from the many small Dutch island stations,

[27] *See p. 95.*
[28] Commr. J. M. Jackson, R.N. Commanded H.M.A.S. *Una* 1914/16.
[29] Really the 16th; *see p. 41.*

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then from the Philippines, then from various United States vessels, chiefly transports. An appeal from the wrecked Spanish steamer *Fernando Poo,* answered by the British steamer *Patia,* took his attention for some time on the 25th. On the 26th, however, he caught a cypher message in some German code, as well as signals from the British destroyer *Racoon;* and that afternoon the *Komet* ran out of Malakal and made almost due east for about 180 miles[30] before turning south-eastwards into her proper course for Durour Island, west of the Ninigo group. Off Durour on the 29th and 30th she drifted for nearly twenty-four hours, while the local planter hunted up provisions for her. Then another long stretch took her into Peterhaven in the Witu group, where she gave her crew a day's rest. On the 29th she had picked up a press message with bad news in it:

. . . . troops. . . . Australian to-day navy and troops. . . . New Guinea. . . .

and soon Australian Governmment messages with reference to "guards" and "Defence Department" began to come along. Consequently on the 2nd of October, apparently as soon as she reached Peterhaven and obtained later news, she began to spread abroad a warning to all German vessels in the neighbourhood:—

Attention! On 11 September the English captured Rabaul and Herbertshöhe. They are said to have 11,000 men there; 3,000 landed at Rabaul. Bitapaka and Toma were bombarded from the sea. Of the enemy 2 officers and 70 men were killed. We lost First Lieutenant Mayer and the planter Hornung; 15 prisoners were sent to Sydney. The wireless station was betrayed to the enemy, so we blew it up. Japan has been forced by England and the United States to begin hostilities.

It would seem that the news of the capture of Rabaul, in addition to Captain Möller's knowledge—obtained from the *Prinz Eitel Friedrich,* if not earlier—that the German squadron was on its way to the other side of the Pacific, and only small craft were left scattered about the western waters, decided the controllers of the *Komet* to surrender. It is known that in several cases German officials, sure that their country would win in the end, avoided the destruction or damage of the German property which they had in charge by non-resistance and surrender. At any rate, when the *Komet* left the Witu group on the 4th she made straight for her old

[30] By this divergence she consciously or unconsciously avoided the *Sydney.*

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haunt at Komethafen, and stayed there. A few men went ashore each day to cut timber; on the 9th Genten and Walter (the latter being one of the ship's officers) left in the *Talasea,* a small sailing craft, for the north coast. And that is the log's last entry.

Meanwhile at Rabaul the absence of the *Komet* had been causing trouble. Colonel Holmes found her entered in the books as property of the German Administration, and demanded that she should be handed over with the other assets. Governor Haber protested that she had been turned over to the German Navy early in September, and he was no longer responsible for her. Of rumours, of course, there were plenty; she was at Käwieng, up the Sepik River, in Dutch New Guinea—everywhere except where she actually was at the time, namely, at Angaur. A British subject, Stephen Whiteman, who had long lived at Rabaul, was especially eager to get news; and soon native informants suggested to him that she might be in her special retreat on the Talasea coast. This rumour also reached the destroyers, and was probably widespread.

Whiteman now began to pester the naval authorities to send a warship to Talasea. His story grew apace; he had heard on good authority, he said, that the *Komet's* masts had been taken out to make a wireless station ashore, and that the vessel herself was hidden with coconut leaves. Finally, on the 4th of October—the very day on which she actually reached Komethafen—Whiteman's statements seem to have reached Colonel Holmes. The Administrator was at the moment worried, both about the safety of a vessel that was on her way from Australia with stores, and about mysterious wireless messages whose source could not be identified.[31] He therefore—after finding that the *Encounter* was leaving Rabaul that day and could not assist him—commissioned Commander Jackson (then acting as local harbour-master) to take command of the little *Nusa,* man her from the Naval Brigade, arm her with a naval 12-pr. gun, and take Colonel Paton[32] and an infantry detachment to the Talasea coast to

[31] These seem to have come from the *Prinz Eitel Friedrich.*

[32] Brig.-Gen. J. Paton, C.B., C.M.G., V.D. Commanded 7th Inf. Bde., A.I.F., 1915/17; 6th Inf. Bde., 1917/18. Merchant; of Newcastle, N.S.W.; b. Newcastle, 18 Nov., 1867.

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find and capture the *Komet*. At 4 a.m. on the 9th the expedition set out, taking Whiteman with it as interpreter, and picking up on the way the Japanese Komine. Komine, having later information than Whiteman's (but not quite late enough), was anxious to divert the *Nusa* to the Witu group; luckily it was decided to stand by Whiteman, stale though his news was.

Jackson on the evening of the 10th found himself off the wide bay that lies between Rudiger Point and Wilson Point, a little west of the Willaumez Peninsula, and anchored for the night under the lee of an island with a native village on it. From the natives he with Komine's help[33] obtained exact information of the *Komet's* position, and before dawn next day ran in through the reefs at half-speed, guided by the native chief, until a vessel's masts showed clear above the trees. Quickening up, with the 12-pr. trained on the *Komet's* deck, Jackson steamed within fifty yards of her, taking her completely by surprise. Colonel Paton and Whiteman promptly went aboard and discovered Captain Möller shaving in his cabin; there followed the inevitable surrender, involving 5 officers and a crew of 52. The captured vessel was taken round to Rabaul, sent on to Sydney to be dealt with, and finally converted into an Australian warship and commissioned on the 17th of November as H.M.A.S. *Una*.[34]

IV

We left Admiral Patey and the squadron proceeding to Suva. That port the *Australia* reached on the 12th of October, the *Encounter* and supply-ships having taken so long on the way (mainly owing to the breakdown of the submarine mother-ship *Upolu*) that the *Grantala* was there before them. During the voyage an important Admiralty message was received:—

Japanese Admiralty have been asked to agree to the following arrangements. Japanese Second Squadron to cruise north of latitude

[33] The above account follows Commander Jackson's story in the main. Mr. Whiteman alleged that it was he who obtained information from the island natives, and he who persuaded Captain Möller to surrender. As both Commander Jackson and Mr. Whiteman are dead, their stories will never be reconciled. But all the still current gossip about the *Komet's* elaborate camouflage and her cargo of champagne is false.

[34] This name might be considered prophetic and unlucky by the superstitious. It was evidently intended to mean "First"—the first warship captured by the Australian Navy—and should, of course, have been *Prima;* in actual fact it means "the only one," which it was. But its godfather had no such intention.

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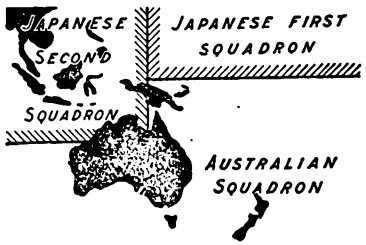
20° S., and west of 140° E. Japanese First Squadron to cruise north of equator and east of 140° E. Australian Squadron to cruise and search south of equator and west of 140° W., to include the French Islands. All these squadrons should communicate whenever possible with each other and with their respective Admiralties, and will by their movements assist each others' operations.



It is now known that the Japanese Admiralty had suggested the drawing of a line at 140° E.—the British and Second Southern Japanese Squadrons to co-operate west of it, the Australian and First Southern Japanese Squadrons to the east; the French (reinforced as required by British and Japanese) to work east of 160° E. As, however, this would place the Australian Squadron under a Japanese admiral, the British Admiralty had suggested the division mentioned in its telegram, incidentally allotting to the Japanese spheres all German islands north of the equator.[35] The Japanese Admiralty agreed; and thus, apparently, originated the later political division of the German islands between Japan and Australasia.

All the news the admiral could collect at Suva confirmed his early belief that the German cruisers were on their way to South America.[36] His orders were to cruise in the Pacific, using Suva as a base; but he promptly suggested, in messages of the 12th and 13th of October respectively:—

(*a*) If Germans intend remaining in Pacific Ocean, it is possible they have established a collier base at Marquesas Islands; or, if they intend to go to America and return westward later on, it is possible also that colliers might be left at Marquesas Islands. Therefore it might be worth while to visit Marquesas Islands and return to Suva.

(*b*) Should it become definitely known that the German squadron has gone to South America, and if Admiralty decided to send Australian Fleet after them, following suggestion is offered: Route proposed to follow, Marquesas Islands and Galapagos Islands. If only *Australia* and *Sydney* go . . . a rendezvous should be arranged with *Newcastle* and *Idzumo*.

[35] To the Australian Squadron were allotted the seas between Pitcairn Island and Australia, and to a British squadron those between Pitcairn and South America.

[36] On the 4th of October a wireless message from the German squadron, in the code used for secret communication with merchant ships, was intercepted at Suva. When decyphered in Melbourne this indicated the position of the *Scharnhorst*—longitude 130° west, that is, on the way from the Marquesas to Easter Island. This information appears to have reached London on the 15th of October, but the Admiralty had not yet definite information that the *Scharnhorst* was accompanied by the rest of the squadron.

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The Admiralty, however, replied on the 14th:—

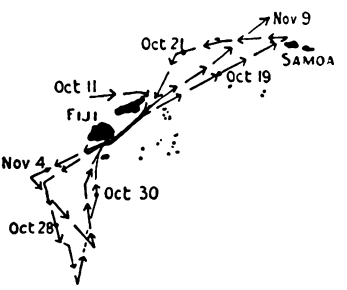
It is decided not to send Australian Fleet to South America. Without more definite information it is not desirable to proceed as far as the Marquesas Islands.

In the next chapter mention will be made of a possible reason for this refusal, which completely justifies the Admiralty's action. The important point to be noted here is that the retention of the Australian Squadron in the western Pacific for so long a time was not due to the admiral in command.

The telegram from which an extract has just been made also detached the *Sydney* from Admiral Patey's force,[37] leaving him the *Australia, Encounter,* destroyers, and submarine only, with the French *Montcalm* in support. Of the cruisers only the *Australia* could be depended on for fast continuous steaming, such as cruiser work demands. Moreover, with only this weak force at his disposal, he was being bombarded with suggestions and requests for support for three expeditions entirely off his beat—one in the *Messina* from Rabaul to make formal occupation of Nauru, another in the cable-ship *Iris* to Fanning Island to repair the broken Pacific cable, and an expedition (dealt with in the next chapter) to take over the northern German islands from Japan. It is hardly amazing that he grew querulous:

To carry out the whole of the proposals with one ship (he wrote) would require that ship to be detached for about two months, and reduce my available force to two ships for that period. To carry out the proposals expeditiously would require three ships, and thus remove the whole of my force from the sphere laid down for their operations by the Admiralty.

There now began a period nearly four weeks long during which the *Australia,* like a dog tethered to his kennel, made darts into neighbouring waters and was pulled back before any results could be obtained. She visited Samoa on the 20th of October; later in the month she did three-legged cruises in the waters between Fiji and New Caledonia. "Everyone is rather fed up", wrote an officer in her, "at our doing nothing,



[37] The *Sydney* was recalled to join the ships escorting the convoy to Egypt. As she needed docking and had to coal, this meant another four days' delay in sending the convoy to sea.

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and we are all very sick at not being allowed to cross to America, but still I suppose it is right. Perhaps there are, after all, some of our armoured cruisers (*Drakes*) from the Atlantic on the south-west coast waiting for them; they would be just in time if they were, but it would spoil our game completely." Not long afterwards a message from London explained what force actually was awaiting the Germans' arrival—on the southern coast the *Good Hope, Canopus, Monmouth, Glasgow,* and *Otranto;* on the northern coast the *Rainbow* and *Newcastle,* and the Japanese warships *Hizen* and *Idzumo.* "A very curious collection," comments the officer just quoted.

In minor ways, however, the establishment of a base at Suva proved useful, notably in intercepting Australian and British colliers that had been despatched from Newcastle (N.S.W.) with very vague orders about the destination of their coal. More will be said upon this subject in a later chapter; but it may be noted here that, when a collier with 4,800 tons aboard was cleared for Honolulu (where nine enemy steamers, three of which had already been used to coal the German squadron, were lying), her detention by any British warship that met her was an obvious and necessary result.

But Admiral Patey never lost sight of his natural objective. During the Suva period his supply-ships were kept in readiness to accompany him at a minute's notice; his fast collier, the *Mallina,* was always complete as regards both cargo and bunker coal, and a slower collier, the *Koolonga,* carried a full cargo of 6,500 tons in case there should be time to despatch her ahead of the *Australia.* These precautions were at last justified. On the 3rd of November intercepted wireless messages proved that the German ships were on the South American coast. On the 5th came the news of the disaster at Coronel. Next day a message from the Naval Board indicated that the *Australia* would soon be sent to Honolulu; and inquiries made of the Admiralty brought a counter-inquiry how soon the *Australia* would be ready to proceed to the North American coast *viâ* Fanning Island, detaching the *Montcalm* to escort the second New Zealand contingent across the Tasman Sea. There was no hesitation about the reply:

Australia ready to proceed at once when ordered. (November 7, 9.49 p.m.)

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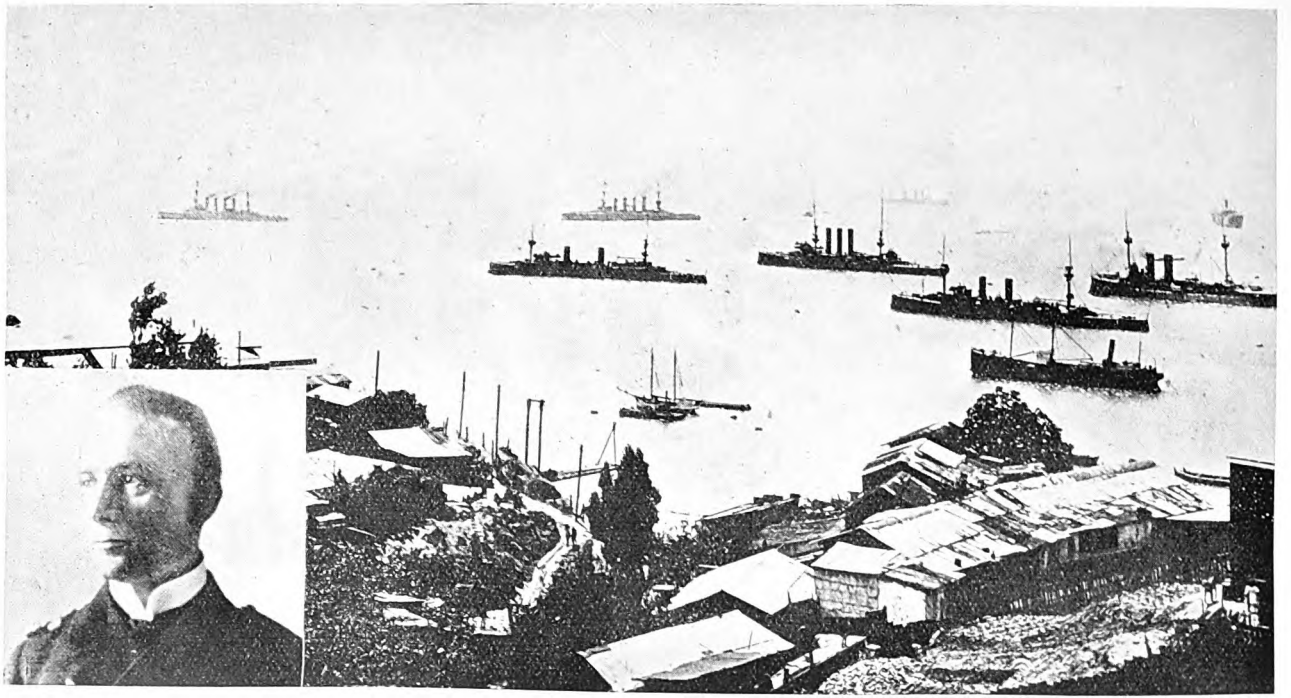

THE GERMAN PACIFIC SQUADRON IN VALPARAISO HARBOUR, NOVEMBER 1914

Inset: Captain von Müller of the *Emden*.

German Official Photographs.

To face p. 124.

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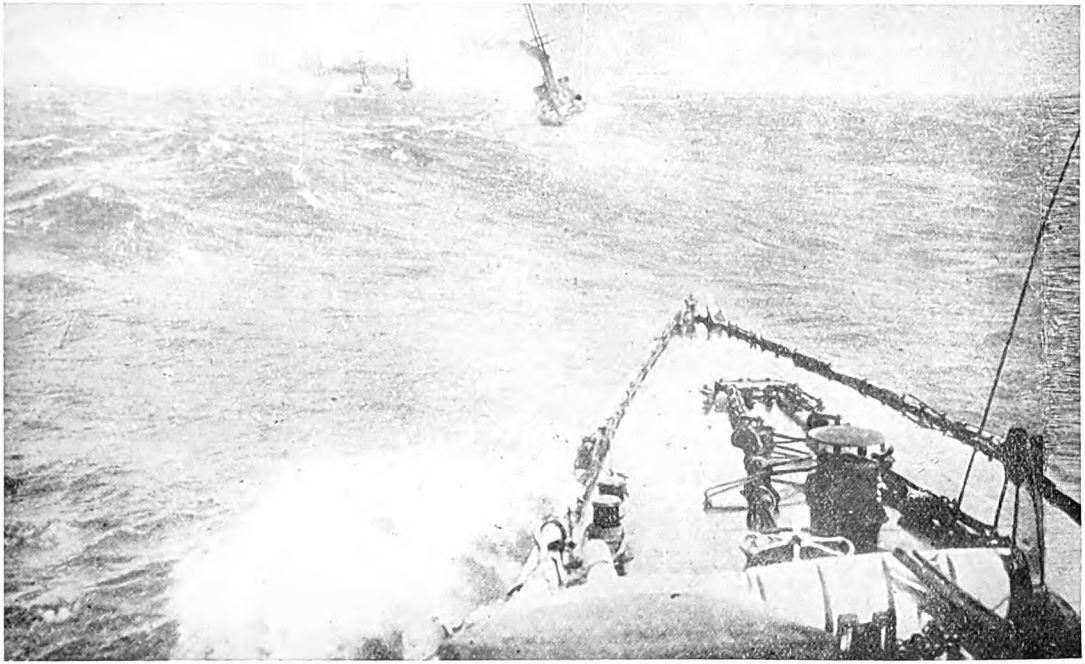

THE GERMAN PACIFIC SQUADRON AT SEA OFF THE COAST OF CHILE

Photograph from the *Dresden* several weeks after the Battle of Coronel. Next ahead is *Nürnberg*—then *Leipzig*, *Gneisenau*, and *Scharnhorst*.

German Official Photograph.

To face p. 125.

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Sail from Suva 10 a.m. 8th November in *Australia,* accompanied by collier *Mallina.* (November 8, 6.50 a.m.)

So she was off at last—not directly in chase of the enemy, but at least in their direction and in pursuance of a plan to trap them. Her first order mentioned Honolulu as a coaling place. But at Fanning Island—probably just because the admiral's wise judgment had kept the *Mallina* always ready to coal her anywhere and at a moment's notice—she was directed to fill up her bunkers immediately and make straight for Magdalena Bay in Lower California.

The German cruisers being by now located, the Admiralty had determined to catch them wherever they went. From the Chilean coast they could (*a*) proceed, as they actually did, round South America into the Atlantic, (*b*) make northwards along the American coast either to and through the Panama Canal or past it to attack Canadian ports, or return on their tracks to the western Pacific. Admiral Sturdee's squadron blocked the Atlantic route; to guard the western Pacific it was arranged that a powerful Japanese squadron should be stationed at Fiji (although this did not eventually happen, since it became unnecessary); the *Australia* and her new mates were intended to block the road to Canada, to follow the Germans into the Atlantic if they passed through the canal, and to establish a guard in the Magellan Straits and off Cape Horn in case they should break back from Sturdee's offensive.

The *Australia* reached Fanning Island on the 14th, left it again after coaling the same day, and steered for Magdalena. On the way, however, her rendezvous was altered; the *Newcastle* had met the three Japanese warships (*Asama, Idzumo, Hizen*)[38] and was bringing them farther south to save time. Chamela Bay on the Mexican coast (just north of Manzanillo) was chosen as the rendezvous, on account of its isolation; and there on the 26th Admiral Patey took command of his new squadron, Captain Moriyama of the *Idzumo* being promoted rear-admiral by the Japanese authorities to control the Japanese cruisers under the British admiral's general direction.

[38] The *Idzumo* (armoured cruiser, 9,570 tons; guns: 4 8-in., 14 6-in.) had been in American waters all along; the *Asama* (a sister-ship to the *Idzumo*) and *Hizen* (battleship, 12,700 tons; guns: 4 12-in., 12 6-in.) were sent post-haste from the Marshalls.

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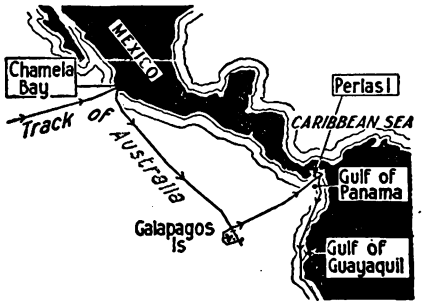
The squadron now proceeded to the Galapagos Islands, detaching the *Newcastle* on the way to examine Cocos Island. No enemy vessel was found there, or after a two days' search through the Galapagos group; and the Admiralty next ordered a close search of the South American coast from Perlas Island in the Gulf of Panama to the Gulf of Guayaquil in Ecuador. As the Germans had been off Valparaiso when last heard of on the 13th, it was expected that something more would be known about them by the time the *Australia* reached Guayaquil.



Accordingly the squadron left the Galapagos group about midday on the 6th of December. On the 10th, just before entering the Gulf of Panama, came the news of the Falkland Islands battle—"the worst piece of really good news we have yet had," as an officer described it. The effect on the *Australia's* crew was disheartening. "We are, of course," wrote one of them, "very glad it has been done; but that we should be disappointed after four months' expectations, in the most trying climate and after all these long trips, is very hard. It makes one feel—everyone is alike—that we have been through a war which is now over, and that peace has been declared without our even seeing our much respected enemy. We are now, as it were, on leave, about to see a most interesting thing (the Panama Canal) and go through it,[39] and when our next opponent is named or we are actually ordered home again, it will be like starting again—beginning a fresh war—and we shall try to forget our bad luck."

In Australia, too, although the long absence of the flagship and the exploits of the *Sydney* had left the general public almost indifferent to the doings of the *Australia,* those whose business or personal relations with the crew kept them mindful of her were bitterly disappointed that she had missed the final

[39] In actual fact they did not—*see p. 127.*

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action. A good deal of resentment against her commanding officer made itself apparent, and her retention in the western Pacific was afterwards unjustly attributed to his decision. For this reason, emphasis has been laid in this narrative on the true causes of that retention. At no time had Australian authorities the full knowledge of the world-wide situation possessed by the Admiralty, and it would be absurd to criticise the orders that came from Whitehall; but it is fair to all those who at this end of the world influenced the *Australia's* actions to remove from their shoulders the onus which has sometimes been placed there, of having dragged a big battle-cruiser about the Pacific on minor expeditions, and then detained her from her proper work of chasing the German ships until they were run down by more enterprising commanders.

The rest of the *Australia's* cruising, until she reached England, may be told very briefly. On the same day that brought the news of the Falklands fight a message from the Admiralty directed Admiral Patey to take his ship through the canal to Jamaica, leaving two of the Japanese warships and the *Newcastle* under Admiral Moriyama to search the South Pacific for German auxiliaries and supply-ships. Unfortunately the canal was at the moment closed to heavy traffic, and the *Australia* was compelled to take the long course round South America, calling at Callao, St. Felix Island, and Valparaiso *en route*. On the 14th of December she left Pinas Bay, reaching Callao on the 18th and Valparaiso on the 26th.

Meanwhile it became known that the *Dresden,* the only German survivor of the Falklands battle, had made back into the Pacific, and arrangements were made to corner her. The

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Japanese ships were set to watch the Galapagos Islands and the coast of Ecuador, in case the fugitive should try to reach the canal; the *Newcastle* went south at high speed to co-operate with the British cruisers (*Glasgow, Bristol, Kent,* and *Orama*) which were following the *Dresden* into the Pacific. This was light-cruiser work: the *Australia* was wanted for greater tasks. She left Valparaiso on the 27th, passed the scene of the Coronel fight on the 28th (the ship was stopped, a service held, and funeral honours paid to the brave men who had died), and entered Magellan Straits on the 31st. The next day, just after passing through the straits, a propeller was injured, and she made for the Falkland Islands at half-speed; there, while repairs were being effected, orders came that she should proceed to Jamaica, still flying the flag of Admiral Patey, but now as vice-admiral in command of the West Indies station. As by this time the *Melbourne* was searching the South Caribbean for the *Karlsruhe,* and the *Sydney* was on her way to the same station, the three Australian ships would reunite.

The Falklands were left on the 5th of January. Late in the afternoon next day a vessel was sighted about twenty miles away, quite off the regular steamer track; she was chased, but, as the *Australia* was still hampered by propeller trouble, the stranger was ten miles distant at sunset, and had to be brought to by a 12-inch round from the foremost turret. She turned out to be the *Eleonore Woermann,* a 5,000-ton Hamburg liner. She carried seven naval boats, painted grey (as were her masts, funnel, and upper works), and had evidently been in use as an auxiliary to the German squadron. Since the *Australia* had not enough men to spare for a prize crew, and the prize had not speed enough to accompany her captor without unduly delaying her, it was decided to sink her, taking officers and crew aboard the *Australia.*

On the 11th new orders diverted the *Australia* to Gibraltar *viâ* St. Vincent; reaching the latter port on the 20th, she was again diverted, this time to Plymouth, which was reached shortly after midnight on the 28th. And so the first Australian battle-cruiser completed her first commission, a little over eighteen months long, during which she had run 59,514 miles, the greater part of this distance being covered in the last six months of the commission and under war conditions.

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CHAPTER V

AFFAIRS IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC

THE series of operations next to be considered cannot be comprehended until something has been said about Japan's entry into the war. This was earnestly desired by the Imperial authorities, in order to relieve the comparatively weak China Squadron of the task of patrolling Chinese waters; but the Australian fear of Japanese aggrandisement had long been known, and on the 11th of August, while negotiations with Japan were still in progress, the Commonwealth Government was informed from London that

> we believe that the action of Japan will not extend to the Pacific Ocean beyond China Seas.

A little later, on the 17th, the British Press Bureau issued the following statement:—

> It is understood that the action of Japan will not extend to the Pacific Ocean beyond the China Seas, except in so far as it may be necessary to protect Japanese shipping lines in the Pacific, nor beyond Asiatic waters westward of the China Seas, nor to any foreign territory except territory in German occupation on the continent of eastern Asia.

It would seem that at that time the Admiralty still believed[1] that the two big German cruisers were in Chinese waters.

This belief soon became untenable. Japanese cruisers were invited to join the China Squadron in searching Malaysian waters, and on the 10th of September the Commonwealth Government was informed that

> Japanese ships and destroyers may very likely cruise in the Pacific round Marianne and Caroline Islands in order to hunt down German squadron which is believed to be in those parts, and which will prey upon British and Japanese shipping in Pacific unless it is attacked.

No more was officially heard of Japanese movements until on the 22nd the Admiralty telegraphed that a Japanese squadron would be at Jaluit about a week later, and a second would be despatched from Japan towards Rabaul.[2] The latter squadron was to take a track west of the Carolines and to

[1] *Cf. footnote on p. 49.*

[2] The German intelligence system in Eastern seas was then working excellently. During the night of the 21st, the wireless steamer *Luneberg*, then lying at Makassar, sent out a wireless message for the *Cormoran*:—

> "Part of Japanese Fleet going to Australia."

Makassar was a great centre of German intrigue; the *Siar*, it will be remembered, was re-provisioned there.

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protect Australian trade-routes in the Molucca Passage and Banda Sea. Admiral Patey was directed to work in harmony with these squadrons, but received no answers from them, though he could hear their signals; and the next news he obtained was on the 2nd of October from the China Squadron, that Jaluit had been searched without result on the 29th of September. The next evening he was ordered to Suva, and on his way heard of the new spheres of action allotted to himself and the Japanese.[3]

The doings of Japanese ships in the western Pacific were unknown to the Australian authorities until on the 14th of October a message dated the 13th was received from the Colonial Office:—

> Japanese Government state that in course of searching western Pacific islands for enemy vessels and bases squadron called Yap on October 7th and landed marines to investigate wireless telegraph and cable stations there. They found that both had been repaired and used by Germans and since destroyed again. They have temporarily occupied it, but they are ready to hand it over to an Australian force.[4] On account of strategic importance island must be occupied by some force. Your Ministers will remember that it was originally intended that they should send force to occupy Yap, and they will no doubt agree that it is desirable to relieve Japanese as quickly as possible of the task of holding the island. Japanese Government have therefore been informed it is intention of your Government to occupy Yap, and I am communicating with Admiralty as to provision of transport.
>
> Please ask Ministers to arrange in communication with Admiral Patey details of force to be sent. It need not be large, and could presumably be detached from force already in occupation of German possessions.

Such an offer had not been expected, but it was obviously one to be accepted without delay. The Naval Board therefore telegraphed to Admiral Patey, who was at this time at Suva, pointing out that the *Geier, Prinz Eitel Friedrich,* and *Cormoran* were all still at large—probably in western Pacific waters—and asking whether he could spare the *Encounter* to escort the proposed expedition. If he could not, the *Berrima* might be more heavily armed and used "with some risk." Further, said the Board,[5] why not occupy all the islands while the expedition was at work—the Pelews, the Marshalls, the Carolines, possibly even the Mariannes, "in order to open up

[3] *See pp. 121-2.*
[4] The Japanese Admiralty had suggested that the island should be occupied by either British, Australian, or Japanese forces.
[5] Probably influenced by the belief that the islands had been "surrendered."

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trade," provided only that food supplies could be ensured? A few hours later an alternative suggestion was sent—that the troops should be escorted to Yap by the *Pioneer* and *Fantome*.

Admiral Patey was now beginning his proper work of hunting for German warships, and did not at all approve of letting his ships return to convoy duty. If the matter, he said, was considered of sufficient importance, the *Encounter* could be detached; but in his own judgment

> squadron has not sufficient ships to provide for convoys and carrying out my legitimate work of searching for the enemy at same time.

He added that Yap was "now within Japanese sphere of operations as arranged by Admiralty," and that Japan should therefore provide escort for any troops proceeding northwards from Rabaul. The *Fantome* was not suitable for escort duty in war-time, being merely a small survey-ship; the *Pioneer* was needed for escorting convoys in the Indian Ocean. His suggestion was that the *Berrima,* if properly armed, could go unescorted.

The Board, while unable to adopt this suggestion, since it had been decided to turn the *Berrima* into a transport[6] for use in the Indian Ocean, sympathised with Admiral Patey's objection to losing the *Encounter,* and told the Admiralty on the 17th that she could not at the time be spared; furthermore, she drew too much water to enter the harbour either at Yap or at Ponape. They proposed (*a*) that a vessel should be temporarily detached from the China Squadron to take over Yap—which was at the moment the most important of the northern islands—from the Japanese; (*b*) that the Australian Government should arm the *Fantome* and *Komet* with 4-inch guns, man them from the Australian Navy, and use them to escort a small expedition under a Commissioner empowered to

> report on Government organisation, trade, food supplies, wireless communication, and naval requirements, and to take possession of Pelew, Marshall, Caroline, and Marianne Islands;

[6] The *Berrima* had in the first place been requisitioned as a transport, but for the expedition to Rabaul was commissioned as an auxiliary cruiser. Auxiliary cruisers were afterwards required by Admiral Patey for the protection of Australian commerce against possible raids by the *Cormoran* and *Prinz Eitel Friedrich*. The Naval Board wished to avoid taking over any of the mail-steamers, and asked if the *Berrima* or a similar vessel would be suitable. Patey on the 14th of October replied by letter that, while a faster ship was preferable, the *Berrima* would be useful if fully armed. On her return from Rabaul, however, she was, unfortunately, allowed to revert to the Transport Branch. This deprived Australia of a good auxiliary cruiser which would have been most useful later on; and many other vessels were available for transport work.

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(*c*) that the *Pioneer* or *Encounter*,[7] if available when the expedition was ready to start, might be attached to the escort. The Admiralty seems to have ignored the proposals concerning the *Fantome* and *Komet*—though they approved of manning the *Fantome* with Australian sailors—but replied that the *Pioneer* could be detached from convoy duty[8] at Cocos Island and join the expedition thereafter. This, as was at once seen, involved putting off the start of the expedition until December at earliest, and in the end actually caused the whole plan of occupying the northern islands to come to nothing.

On the 23rd of October, these preliminaries having been settled, the Board addressed to its Minister (who was still responsible for military as well as naval administration) an important series of proposals that must be stated here in full. The actual minute is therefore reproduced:—

The attached copy of cablegram from Secretary of State for the Colonies, dated 19th August, 1914, points out the necessity of effectively occupying the islands lately under German administration from Rabaul.

The Admiralty have stated that the *Pioneer* may be used for this purpose after her return from convoy work. She would be available at Rabaul towards the end of November. The *Komet*, after refit at Sydney, should be available by the same date.

For effective occupation and administration the following arrangements appear to be necessary:—

(*a*) Organisation of administrative staff.
(*b*) Provision of force to ensure control and obedience.
(*c*) Provision of means of communication, including wireless station.
(*d*) Encouragement of trade, including the supply of food to the islands.
(*e*) Examination of harbours and of their strategic value.
(*f*) Examination of captured W/T stations, and establishment of W/T stations in defensible positions, suitable for strategic, administrative, and commercial work.

These islands closely affect the whole question of the naval defence of Australia in the future. They are of great strategic importance. It is therefore desirable that the Naval Board should assist in the organisation of the above arrangements.

---

[7] This reference to the *Encounter*, which at first sight seems to be inconsistent with the earlier mention of her as unavailable, was prompted by a message from the admiral. He told the Board that the Admiralty had decided not to send the Australian ships to South America—indeed, without more definite information about the German cruisers, he was not even to go as far east as the Marquesas (*see p. 123*). If, therefore, the cruisers were soon located, and still the ships were not to go to South America, he could easily spare the *Encounter* for convoy work.

[8] With the second Australian convoy, not due to start until the middle of November.

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To simplify the general control, provision of stores, etc., and to avoid duplication of work, it is considered that the forces sent to these islands should be under naval control, particularly as their efficiency must largely depend upon the co-operation of the fleet.

This arrangement would correspond to the control of the Admiralty over the marines, and would leave the Commonwealth military department free to concentrate on the military defence of Australia and the provision and training of the contingents now being sent to Europe.

With regard to the administrative organisation, it is recommended that the Department of External Affairs should take this in hand, co-operating with the Naval Board in the organisation of the expedition which it is proposed to send to occupy the islands.

On the same day, however, the Chief of the General Staff suggested independently to the Minister that the military authorities were concerned in the matter; and the Minister ordered a joint conference, which took place on the 26th. Its report embodied practically the whole of the above minute, but with certain variations and additions. In the first place, the occupation of Yap was considered as a separate enterprise. "It would thus appear," said the report, "that Admiralty do not consider it necessary to occupy Yap until *Pioneer* can be ready for this service. *Pioneer* can be at Rabaul about 1st December. If, however, the Commonwealth Government desire an earlier occupation to be effected, this could be carried out either by (*a*) sending *Protector*—now at Townsville—to Rabaul, either to carry or convoy the force; or (*b*) sending a force of 60 officers and men at once, and direct, from Rabaul, by one of the small captured steamers now there." With regard to the "larger expedition to all the islands" the conference recommended that it should be fitted out at Sydney in time to reach Rabaul simultaneously with the *Pioneer;* that the *Komet* should accompany it, if possible; that the administration should be military, and the force under military control; that representatives of the Departments of External Affairs and Trade and Customs should accompany the expedition; and that the other objects of the expedition, as set out in items (*c*), (*e*), and (*f*) of the Naval Board's minute, should be left under naval control. The force required would be 200 men, who should be enrolled as military police.

Before a decision was finally reached, it was discovered that no coal was available at Rabaul. The suggestion to send a small expedition from that place to Yap was therefore abandoned.

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On the 27th the Minister gave his decision, practically confirming the recommendations of the joint conference. He left the inquiry into trade matters in the hands of the Department of External Affairs only, and qualified the naval control of means of communication by inserting "other than mercantile ships"; for the rest, he accepted the report. But it is clear that the Government was not at all easy in its mind about Yap, and objected to the long delay; for on the 1st of November the captain in charge at Garden Island was directed to select for the expedition a transport and a collier "to leave Sydney about 14 November or soon after." This selection proved more difficult than had been expected. although several German merchant-vessels captured early in the war were lying in Port Jackson; for the expedition must take with it at least five months' provisions and a large supply of coal, inasmuch as a tour round the islands involved 7,000 miles of steaming in a voyage of about five weeks. Moreover, on the 11th of November a vessel arriving from the Solomons reported that the Germans on Bougainville—which had not yet been formally occupied by Colonel Holmes—had imprisoned thirty British planters and had entrenched themselves, with a force of 500 armed natives, in the hills behind the chief settlement, Kieta. As there were at the time no warships in New Britain, and a revolt of such dimensions could not be handled with the small craft at Colonel Holmes's disposal, this meant that the Naval Board must arrange for a second expedition. The notion of using the first to suppress the Kieta disturbance before going on to Yap was mooted, but rejected on account of the delay. Consequently by the 12th of November the Board's plans had developed as follows:—

A. Islands Expedition.

The *Komet* (refitted and commissioned as an Australian warship) and the steamship *Eastern* (carrying Commander Pethebridge[9] and 200 troops) would leave Sydney on the 26th of November, pick up the Lieutenant-Governor of Papua (to act as representative of the Department of External Affairs), and visit Angaur, Yap, Ponape, Jaluit, and Nauru; at each of these islands occupation would be formally proclaimed and a garrison left in charge. A visit to Saipan in the Mariannes might be fitted in, if thought advisable, between Yap and Ponape.

9 Brig.-Gen. Sir S. A. Pethebridge, K.C.M.G. Secretary, Department of Defence; of Brisbane and Melbourne; b. Brisbane, 3 Aug., 1862. Died of illness, 25 Jan., 1918.

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B. Bougainville Expedition.

The *Fantome* (manned with Royal Australian Naval ratings and commissioned as an Australian warship) and the *Signal* (a small German merchant-ship which before the war traded in the Malay Archipelago and China seas) would leave Sydney on the 12th of December for Tulagi in the Solomons, pick up a military guard there and land it at Kieta, and then search for a small German armed steam yacht, the *Buka,* which was in hiding somewhere on the Bougainville coast.

Not yet, however, had finality been reached. On the 19th—for reasons which do not appear in the documents now available, but probably because the situation at Kieta seemed too serious for any delay—the two expeditions were amalgamated; the *Komet* (now rechristened *Una*[10]) and *Eastern* were to meet the *Fantome* off Shortland Island on the 10th of December, and occupy and garrison Kieta before proceeding on their voyage to Yap. The *Fantome* could then be left to hunt down the *Buka.* The *Signal,* following at leisure, would pick up the island expedition at Ponape with fresh supplies of coal.

Matters were now so far advanced that on the 20th the Admiralty was informed of the plans last made in a message which, after reciting the Bougainville scheme, went on:

Una and *Eastern* proceed Rabaul, re-embark military troops, proceed Yap, Angaur, Saipan, Ponape, Jaluit, Nauru, Rabaul, occupy islands and land troops where necessary.

The very next day another alteration was made. Admiral Patey had by this time received his long-awaited orders to take the *Australia* across the Pacific, and had in consequence recommended that use should be made of the three destroyers to search the Bismarck group and the New Guinea coast for any small German craft that might still be in hiding. The Bougainville adventure was therefore handed over to them, and once more the *Una* and *Eastern* were free to go straight to Yap.

But by now it was too late. The suggestion made by the Japanese Admiralty to the British Admiralty early in October must have somehow become known in Japan. And the Japanese people were in a mood to be peculiarly sensitive about the operations in the Pacific. They looked upon the capture of Tsingtao as their own particular achievement, and

[10] *See p. 121.*

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resented the co-operation of British forces[11] in it. They took great and justifiable pride in their navy, and—probably even at this early stage of the war—believed that it was dominating the situation throughout the northern Pacific. They knew that it had captured various groups of German islands. And then they discovered—it is not clear how—that these trophies of their navy's power were to be handed over to the Australians.[12]

The effect was immediate and decisive. Riots broke out in Tokyo; immense pressure was brought to bear on the Government; and the offer had to be hastily withdrawn. What might have been carried through quietly and satisfactorily in mid-October—possibly with subsequent disturbances, but with nothing that could have upset a *fait accompli*—became impossible as soon as its nature leaked out in advance.

The first intimation of this trouble reached Melbourne on the 24th of November, when a telegram dated the 23rd from the Colonial Office suggested that "without prejudice to permanent arrangements" Angaur should be left to Japanese occupation. As Angaur had been specifically mentioned in the message of the 19th of August,[13] the Australian Government was a little surprised; but, anxious to do just what was wanted and no more, it inquired, on the 24th, whether this suggestion applied to Angaur only, or to other Pacific groups. The reply was prompt:—

> We think it desirable for the present that the expedition to occupy German islands should not proceed to any islands north of Equator.

A further request for information, sent on the 25th, elicited on the 3rd of December the answer that it was "for strategic reasons" most convenient to leave all the northern groups—Pelews, Mariannes, Carolines, and Marshalls—for the present in Japanese hands, "leaving the whole question of future to be settled at end of war." And so the expedition, which had

[11] A battalion of British troops and about half a battalion of Indian troops were attached to the Japanese army of 23,000; and H.M.S. *Triumph* took part. The object was probably to allay uneasiness in America.

[12] It is quite possible, of course, that the Japanese Government had not intended to hand over the eastern groups. The original offer, as transmitted to Australia, mentioned Yap only; and as late as 25 Nov. the Japanese Admiralty was proposing to transfer that island to the Australian force with some ceremony. But, whatever their intention was, the Tokyo riots forced them to abandon it.

[13] *See p. 63.* A more detailed account of the negotiations between the British and Australian Governments concerning the N.W. Pacific Expedition will be found in *Vol. X, ch. x.*

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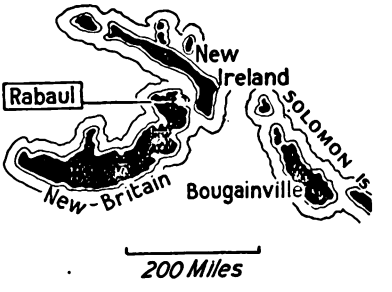
been so completely fitted out that it even carried with it postage-stamps overprinted "N.W. Pacific," came to an end before it sailed.

II

Although the occupation of islands north of the equator was no longer possible, there was still a good deal of work to be done south of it.

The expedition to Bougainville was carried out by a small force detached from the garrison at Rabaul before the destroyers arrived; the news of a German revolt[14] was discovered to be false, and the island was formally occupied without opposition on the 9th of December.[15] But towards the end of November a German prisoner of war interned at Holdsworthy, probably exaggerating and confusing reports that he had heard in September of the *Cormoran's* stay at Port Alexis, informed the authorities that a German "merchant cruiser" (*i.e.*, merchantman fitted out as auxiliary cruiser) was hidden sixty miles up the great Sepik River in New Guinea, which the Germans had named "Kaiserin Augusta." His report was extremely detailed; even the exact hiding-place was given:—[16]



A shallow creek runs from point where she is hidden forty miles from entrance meeting sea lat. 3° 40′ S., long. 143° 55′ E., at a point 37 miles west by north from entrance to river. At mouth of this creek is a German mission station. . . .

[14] *See p. 134.*

[15] The flag had by this time been hoisted at the following stations:—Rabaul and Herbertshöhe in New Britain; Käwieng, Namatanai, and Muliama in New Ireland; Friedrich Wilhelm Harbour on the New Guinea mainland; Kieta in Bougainville; Komuli, Nares Harbour, and Lorengau in the Admiralty group; Maron in the Hermits; Mioko in the Duke of York group; and on the islands of New Hanover, Buka, and Nauru.

[16] There was no such creek and no such mission station, and no German vessel was up the river. There was a German mission station at Marienberg, forty miles upstream, and the old original *Cormoran* had been there—in 1909. The details of the report are given here to show the sort of intelligence material with which the naval authorities had to work. Detail of such particularity was naturally all but convincing.

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It was therefore decided to use practically the whole of the force under Colonel Pethebridge to clear up the situation in New Guinea. The *Yarra* was sent on to Rabaul to escort Colonel Holmes and his troops to Friedrich Wilhelm Harbour, while the *Warrego* and *Parramatta* went directly to that port. Their business was to seize the (mythical) mission station and to block the mouth of the Sepik. Active operations against the up-river Germans were to be left over until the *Una* and *Eastern* arrived.

For one reason or another these orders were not carried out. When Colonel Pethebridge reached Friedrich Wilhelm Harbour on the 7th of December in the *Eastern,* he found the *Warrego* there in company with the *Siar* and *Nusa,* bringing troops from Rabaul, and the little mission steamer *Gabriel,* which had been seized on suspicion of communicating with the hidden Germans. Next day the heads of two German missions came in, and their statements were so convincing that the whole arrangement of the expedition was altered. Leaving the *Yarra* on guard off the river-mouth, Colonel Pethebridge took the *Warrego, Parramatta,* and *Nusa* upstream to the Marienberg station, where they found one white missionary, and twenty miles on to Angorum, where there was a police dépôt. At this place they found a sick German doctor; the police officer, Tafel, with about thirty native police had left a few hours earlier. No cruiser or other vessel of any kind was or had been there; and the only other Germans known to be on the river were two scientific men, Messrs. Thurnwald[17] and Fiebig, who were several hundred miles farther inland. So the doctor was brought away, having taken an oath of neutrality, and left at Marienberg; and Colonel Pethebridge, satisfied that no enemy action in those parts was to be apprehended, departed on the 15th for Rabaul.

But the officer in command of the destroyers, Commander Cumberlege, thought it might be worth while to find out a little more about this mysterious river. Accordingly on the 13th he notified the Naval Board:

Am making systematic search of Kaiser Wilhelms Land with destroyers and *Nusa.* Consider destroyers most suitable for this work, larger ships being unable to negotiate reef navigation. Kaiserin

[17] Thurnwald was the ethnologist of the big German expedition of 1912; he had stayed on in New Guinea.

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Augusta blank as far as information obtained is concerned; I believe, however, that intention was to form a military post, but that it has not materialised.

On the 14th the destroyers and *Nusa,* having filled up with oil and stores at Madang,[18] left for the Sepik River, at the mouth of which they picked up the *Siar* and the motor-boat *Witu.*

Rivers play an important part in the physical geography of that section of New Guinea which before the war was under German rule. Almost from end to end its coastal district is a comparatively narrow strip immediately backed by mountain ranges. Behind these ranges extends, also from end to end, a sort of trough formed by the valleys of three great rivers—the Wussi or Markham, the Ramu, and the Sepik. The Wussi flows south-east into Huon Gulf; the other two flow north-west and east respectively towards a point on the coast in the neighbourhood of lat. 4° S., where there was probably once a gulf, though the deposits brought down by the two big streams have long since filled it up (the Sepik's deposit colours the sea-water yellow for quite twenty miles from the shore). Of the Wussi very little is known; Governor Haber was thinking of sending an expedition up it when the war broke out. The Ramu has been explored for about 120 miles inland, up to which distance it is navigable in favourable circumstances for vessels drawing 9 feet.

The Sepik is on a larger scale. For sixty miles from its mouth large ocean steamers can navigate it safely; for another 200 miles it is open to vessels drawing 10 to 13 feet of water, the channel varying from 300 yards to a mile in width. This channel, however, changes frequently, so that navigation is not easy. In the years before the war several exploring expeditions attacked the Sepik; the most important were (*a*) that of von Schleinitz in 1886, which reached the meridian of 143° E. in the steamer *Ottilie* of 11-feet draught, and passed 142° E. in a steam-launch, thus opening up about 300 miles of river-course; (*b*) that of the *Cormoran* (the original warship of that name, a light cruiser of 1,600 tons drawing about 14 feet) which in 1909 penetrated about 160 miles inland; (*c*) those of the Dutch and Dutch-German boundary commissions in 1910, which took the small steamer *Pionier* up

[18] This name, from the date of our occupation, replaced the cumbrous German "Friedrich Wilhelmshafen."

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to long. 142° E. and then in a steam-sloop and—when that ran aground—Dyak canoes passed the German-Dutch boundary line, repassed it into German territory, and tracked it almost to its point of emergence from the Victor Emanuel Range. Behrmann's expedition of 1912-13 filled in a great many details, but added little to previous knowledge of the main stream. Roughly speaking, the river valley up to the *Ottilie's* farthest point was found to be a wide swampy riverine plain[19] with distant hills barely visible; about 143° E. a range—the Hunstein Range—lay right across the river's course; beyond this was another plain, but with ranges closing in on either hand; and just west of 142° E. the channel shallowed to 6 feet, the current strengthened, and rapids began to occur.

Very little of this information was available to Commander Cumberlege when at 9 a.m. on the 15th of December he started up the river. In the afternoon he reached Marienberg, where during the night the *Siar* joined him; and next morning two destroyers—the *Yarra* being left at Marienberg—and the *Siar* proceeded upstream to Angorum, where a police officer and a body of native police were still at large. Cumberlege accordingly landed a small body of Australian troops that the *Siar* had brought him from Eitape, and sent his own native police scouting into the plain. About 4 p.m. one of these scouts reported that he had been fired on, and a party of 3 officers, 3 other Australians, and 11 natives set out to follow up the clue. Cumberlege's own account gives a vivid idea of the country over which he had to work:—

> Our route lay across slightly undulating grass country, the grass being about the height of one's chin. As we got on low ground cane-brake took the place of the grass, the canes being higher than one's head. We found Sergeant Kun Doo and one other native-police boy hidden in the canes and he gave us the direction, whereupon two native scouts with Sergeant Clarke[20] were despatched a few hundred yards in advance, whilst we followed with the main body. We soon struck the forest, and quietly but very rapidly made our way in single file. The natives seemed to work by instinct, for it was impossible for me to see more than ten yards in any direction.

[19] Viewed with more friendly eyes, this plain was on one occasion (the *Cormoran's* voyage) described as "a beautiful park-like district in which copses of good timber, more extensive forests, and green meadows alternate." But the meadows were mostly reedy swamps.

[20] Clarke subsequently enlisted in the A.I.F. (Pte. J. B. Clarke. Painter; of Dawes Point, N.S.W.; b. Dundee, Scotland, 1881.)

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Shortly we came to a stream, which baulked the scouts for a minute; but Kun Doo, like a master of hounds, at once made a cast downstream for fifty yards or so—when some more noise or scent turned every hound (I mean native) back simultaneously, and the whole party started off in the opposite direction upstream at the run. Soon we came across a game-bag hung in a tree, containing a dead pig and a wallaby; and, the scent being evidently very strong to the natives, we all rushed along through the scrub and suddenly overtook a native. After a few moments' questioning by the natives we struck off from the stream into the forest and, approaching a small rise, stopped and took cover whilst two of the natives scouted the little hill.

After a few seconds' pause we all ran as hard as possible up the hill, led by the faithful Kun Doo and Sergeant Clarke, and immediately surrounded a large bush house recently erected, and found the officer, Tafel, inside, very much out of breath and utterly deserted by his police boys.

That day the flag was hoisted at Angorum; the next was spent in establishing a defensible police post there. On the 18th Cumberlege replanned his voyage. The *Yarra* was instructed by wireless to make a thorough search of the billabongs and tributaries between Angorum and the mouth, the *Siar* and *Witu* being left with her to act as connecting links with the main expedition; the *Nusa* was sent ahead to sound; the *Warrego* and *Parramatta* followed upstream.

For two days the voyage proceeded without excitement. "The noble river," says Cumberlege, "curved and flowed as wide and as deep as lower down; at dusk an anchorage in midstream was made." From time to time "native canoes came alongside—after some persuasion—and did some bartering with the ships' companies. They appeared very shy of ships at first, but were apparently reassured after coming alongside." On the 20th, however, Cumberlege intercepted part of a wireless message:

Penetrate into dangerous or partly unsurveyed waters pending further instructions.

Rightly regarding this as the latter part of an instruction *not* to penetrate farther with the destroyers—which indeed it was, the Naval Board not feeling justified in risking the only three destroyers they had—Cumberlege transhipped to the *Nusa* and sent the two destroyers back to Angorum, with instructions to search the creeks on the way as the *Yarra* was doing farther down. The *Nusa* went on.

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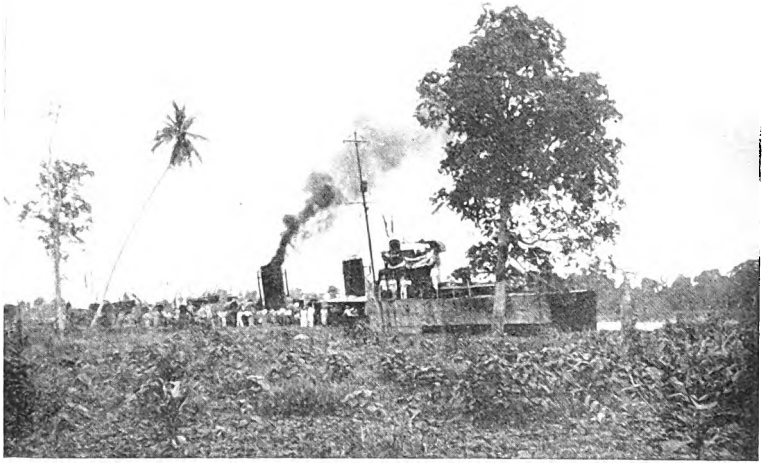

H.M.A.S. *Warrego* IN THE SEPIK RIVER

Lent by Petty Officer A. L. Swinden, R.A.N.

A CONCERT PARTY ON BOARD THE *Yarra* IN THE SEPIK RIVER, CHRISTMAS 1914

Lent by Petty Officer A. L. Swinden, R.A.N.

To face p. 143.

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The river was as wide and as deep here as a hundred miles lower down, and the banks alternated between fringes of cane, forest, and grass, at times passing through wide savannahs of perfectly level grass as far as the eye could see, dotted here and there with compact clumps of trees, having the effect of one great park.

At Malu the first considerable mountains began, and near here we visited the laager established by Bergmann in the 1911 (*sic*) expedition. I was aware that an expedition was supposed to be somewhere up-river, but great anxiety had been expressed to me by the missionary at Marienberg as to their safety, as recently there had been great turbulence among the natives in these parts. A house in Malu, decorated with posts on which were placed alternately an empty kerosene-tin and a skull, gave one to consider. The villagers here were well-dressed, or rather ornamented, a favourite bauble consisting of an armlet constructed of the threaded vertebrae of a human being.

Having searched the laager, we proceeded on our voyage. Once we took a backwater which was not surveyed by the Bergmann expedition, and found a very primitive tribe utterly naked. . . . . These people had certainly never seen a white man, handling one's flesh with evident interest—whether from curiosity as to the colour, or suitability as meat, I am unable to say. They were all well-armed with very long spears and bows and arrows; nevertheless we made friends, and they soon laid by their weapons and conducted us to their village. This was extraordinarily dirty; the houses were cone-shaped and very high, the centre-pole being a large tree with cross-bars lashed on right to the top—evidently to take refuge in if attacked.

Our voyage continued mile after mile through gorgeous forest and mountain scenery, until just before dusk one evening we descried some three miles ahead a white boat secured to the bank. Our speed had decreased owing to having got down to the bad coal; but we were afraid that the boat might make off before we could get to it, so made shift to pour our lamp-oil on the fires and thus brought up our steam and speed. It was not long before we secured alongside the boat, which proved to be a very fine Bolinda cabin launch. We found here the engineer of the expedition and about 30 or 40 boys. A large village had been built, the forest cleared on the mountain side, and gardens planted. The professor, however, was farther up the river with the remainder of the police—25 or 30 natives—in canoes.

This I considered to be the farthest possible limit for a ship of any size to get up. The river was at its normal highest, and even here seven fathoms was obtained; but the current was very powerful, and the drop to normal lowest was said to be three fathoms at least. The *Nusa* could have gone up about another twenty[21] miles when it becomes too shallow for anything but canoes.

We also found here three big motor-launches and one small engine, which was used on a dug-out.

To reach this "head of navigation" Cumberlege had taken six days, that is to say, from the 15th to the 23rd of December,

[21] This limit of navigation corresponds roughly with those noted by previous expeditions. Thus the *Ottilie's* party—using a launch—reached a point at lat. 4° 16′ S. and 141° 50′ E.; the *Pionier* was stopped at lat. 4° 20′ S. and long. 141° 51′ E. The steam-launch of the Dutch-German commission went a little farther, to lat. 4° 4′ S. and long. 141° 12′ E.

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less two days at Angorum. He was back at the river-mouth in four, and "spent a night at sea to rid the ship of mosquitoes, &c."

The two Germans found at the "head of navigation" (which they had called "Mount Maeander," but which Cumberlege rechristened "Paradise Gulch") were brought back to Madang. Thurnwald, however, was disconsolate at his removal; he petitioned to be allowed to continue his research work on the culture and languages of the natives, undertaken from motives purely scientific; and in the following March he was allowed to reside with the missionaries at Marienberg, getting back his instruments, diaries, and specimens.

While from a military point of view the expedition achieved little—there being little to achieve—it was of great value in introducing the natives of the Sepik valley to British rule. "We found," says Cumberlege,

> mistrust amongst the natives very pronounced as far as Angorum, owing, no doubt, to lies propagated by the German officials. But this mistrust has been entirely washed out, the natives being most eager to barter vegetables, curios, &c. They have seen large numbers of Britishers about their villages, and have been treated well. In the higher reaches the German influence did not penetrate. It is wild cannibal country, and they are unable to discriminate between different white peoples on sight. Though shy and suspicious, and undoubtedly treacherous, we found little difficulty in making friends with these primitive people.

Nor was it merely the friendliness that impressed them; the determination to have peace left its mark on them for some years. Only in 1918-19, at the end of the war, did it become necessary to send a second expedition to the river, because by that time, as the officer in charge of this second party reported:

> The reason for the Sepik trouble was the absence of regular supervision, the natives boasting generally that the Government had ceased to exist. All villages are now assured to the contrary.

III

After filling up with stores at Madang, the destroyers resumed their investigations along the New Guinea coast. The *Parramatta* took reliefs for the garrisons at Eitape and

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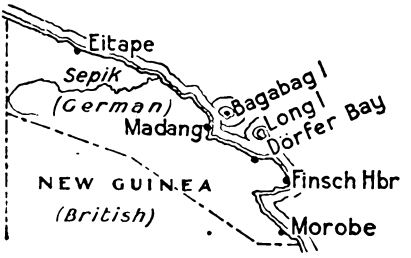

Angorum; the *Warrego* and *Yarra* scrutinised Port Alexis, ran across to Bagabag Island and thence south-eastwards to Long Island and Dörfer Bay, and worked back along the coast to Madang. When the *Parramatta* rejoined the flotilla, Finsch Harbour and Morobe were visited, and the latter garrisoned; and on the 13th of January, 1915, the destroyers proceeded to Rabaul. Another cruise took them round the islands to Kieta (where they located the sunken *Buka*), Käwieng, the Admiralty group, and the Witus; and on the 5th of February, they left Rabaul for Sydney, after two months of constant work done at high tension which, probably more than any other single factor, established British dominance in the huge area of scattered island-groups so recently taken from Germany. It was no light task to occupy with scanty forces and administer with inexperienced officials from southern climates the valued possessions of a Great Power which was a bitter enemy. That such intrigues as were attempted by German colonists during the subsequent period of occupation produced so little effect on the natives whom they had previously ruled was the effect, no doubt, of several causes—but high among them, it can safely be claimed, was the excellent work of Cumberlege's destroyer flotilla in the summer of 1914-15.

For several months after this the destroyers remained on the coast of Australia. It must not be forgotten that the war had caught the Australian Navy still unacquainted with its own country; and destroyers, of all ships, should know most intimately the shores they have to defend. The opportunity was therefore taken, while comparative peace reigned in the western Pacific, to let the flotilla discover for itself the nature of the eastern Australian coast-line. On the 27th of April it left Port Phillip on a cruise which was to include Jervis Bay, Port Jackson, Port Stephens, the estuary of the Clarence, Byron Bay, and a series of inlets within the Barrier Reef.

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The destroyers were ordered, for reasons which will appear hereafter, to keep themselves in a continuous state of readiness for war, to maintain wireless touch with the Naval Board, and not to give any leave beyond the port where they might be lying. By the middle of June they had worked north as far as Cairns, and on their way back began a series of visits to the small Queensland ports and inlets. Early in August all leave was given subject to recall at six hours' notice; the period of quiet was evidently approaching its end. In September the destroyers were docked and thoroughly overhauled; and by the middle of October they were on their way to a new sphere of action. The causes of their departure and the success of their operations must form the subject of a later chapter.[22]

IV

In the islands, too, during the greater part of 1915 comparative quiet reigned. By March it was certain that all the German warships previously in the Pacific had been accounted for, their merchant-vessels safely bottled up, and their colonies securely occupied under either British or Allied administration. The opportunity was taken to attend to details of observation and administration which had hitherto been perforce neglected. The Pethebridge expedition was broken up—its component parts being distributed wherever use could be found for them. The troops in the *Eastern* were used to relieve detachments of the original Holmes expedition, which had been holding outstations in German New Guinea, and Colonel Pethebridge himself succeeded Colonel Holmes[23] as administrator of the occupied territories. The *Una* was lent him for visits to the islands. Her log for the greater part of the year is a record of administrative cruises and surveying expeditions, by which a vast amount of knowledge was gained both for the New Guinea Government and for the navy. On two occasions she made herself especially useful: first, when signs of disaffection were discovered among Germans who had been allowed to remain in the Bismarck Archipelago; next, when it was found necessary to renew in outlying islands, including Nauru, the

[22] *See ch. viii.*

[23] Col. Holmes returned to Sydney, and was given command of an infantry brigade in a contingent for Europe. He fought in Gallipoli and France, became commander of the 4th Australian Division, and was killed in 1917 near Messines.

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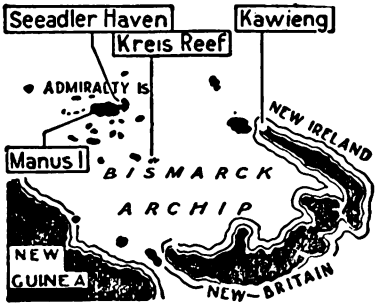
impression made on the natives by the first Australian conquest. Operations of this sort need not be described in detail—though they were by no means unimportant in connection with the naval war, which required the secure policing of possible enemy bases as well as the continuous patrolling of the high seas. But a few extracts from the diary of the *Una's* commander will illustrate the work done:—

On Sunday, 17th January, the Administrator and his staff officer came on board, and at 6.30 p.m. *Una* proceeded for Kreis Reef. . . . At 3 p.m. on 19th, *Una* entered Kreis Reef and anchored. The Administrator then inspected the reef, the lease of which for shell-fishing is a valuable asset in the Administration's funds. At 5.30 p.m. *Una* weighed and proceeded for Seeadler Haven, Manus Island, arriving at 2 p.m. on January 20th.



Administrative work at Seeadler Haven was completed during the afternoon of January 22, and at 6 a.m. on the 23rd *Una* proceeded to cruise around Manus Island, stopping as necessary to enable Administrator to inspect stations and confer with native chiefs. At 4 p.m. on January 25 Seeadler Haven was again reached, *Una* having passed through unsurveyed waters in the interval —thus enabling the Administrator to reach districts previously only visited by small traders.

. . . . . .

Una arrived Käwieng 9.30 a.m. on July 29 and, having seized German schooner *Hasag* en route despatched her with Lieutenant Powles, R.A.N.R.,[24] and an armed party to bring all Germans into Käwieng and to search for hidden arms. This arresting of Germans was carried on by *Hasag* until afternoon of Sunday, August 1st, when she returned with 9 prisoners and confiscated arms. Meanwhile the arrest of Germans had been carried on in New Ireland by military patrols, and a considerable number were interned at Käwieng.

In the morning of August 2nd *Una* proceeded to examine the New Hanover coast and Tingwon Island, arresting Germans en route and confiscating arms. . . . The natives of Tingwon Island stated that a small steamer passed between them and New Hanover southward-bound on Friday July 30th, but I do not consider statement reliable.

The Nauru cruise is perhaps worth more attention. The *Una* left Rabaul with Colonel Pethebridge aboard on the 19th of September, and next day entered the Fead Island lagoon.

[24] Lieut. T. D. M. Powles; R.A.N.R. Trader; of Dutton Park, South Brisbane, and Papua: b. 29 Oct., 1880.

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about 120 miles east of New Ireland. Here a party of natives was taken aboard, and shown round the ship to impress them with the might of Britain; it is recorded, however, that "the novelty of the 4-inch guns, searchlight, etc., was outclassed by the false teeth of the ship's cook, which he caused to appear and disappear with great adroitness." At Nauru, which was reached on the 26th, natives of another type were encountered. A deputation of the native chiefs (who own most of the phosphate land, and are therefore wealthy) explained to the Administrator that

> as children we always understood and hoped that some day the British flag would be hoisted on Nauru. However, the Germans came instead, and for many years they treated us with kindness. For this reason we cannot help feeling a certain affection for the late German Government. But we realize that the expectations of our childhood have at last come to pass, and can already see the benefits of British rule.[25]

At Nauru the *Una* took aboard the Resident Commissioner of the Gilbert and Ellice group (who had recently been appointed Civil Administrator of Nauru, Colonel Pethebridge being the Military Administrator of all the occupied islands) and conveyed him to Ocean Island and round his own group. The Gilbert Island natives had already subscribed £3,000 to war funds, and had offered 500 volunteers for active service; and such an effort on the part of so small a population, numbering only 30,000 in all, was felt to deserve the compliment of showing the White Ensign in the group. That the vessel chosen to show it was an Australian warship, so recently captured from the Germans, added zest to the display.

It must not be thought that the peaceful situation existing during 1915 in the western Pacific extended beyond that region. On the coast of North America the air was full of plots and rumours of raids. Their development and its consequences will be dealt with later.[26] In their early stages, however, diplomatic measures on land and the watchfulness of the Japanese patrolling squadron afloat were considered precaution enough. At the same time the *Encounter,* which had been left behind by Admiral Patey to continue the patrol from the Fiji

[25] It is not, of course, implied that the chiefs used these actual phrases, but they exactly summarise the sentiments expressed in what the reporter describes as "a very sensible and clear speech."

[26] *See pp. 208-12.*

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base, was in August ordered to extend her cruises to Fanning Island, in order to prevent a second cutting of the Pacific cable. The South Pacific had its own excitements. Early in the year credible, though incorrect, rumours located the *Prinz Eitel Friedrich* at Easter Island; and in March the *Dresden*, the sole survivor of von Spee's squadron,[27] was chased into Chilean waters at Juan Fernandez and sunk there[28] by the *Kent, Glasgow,* and *Orama.*

The Australian Squadron was by now scattered over the seven seas. The *Australia* was in the North Sea, and the two fast light cruisers in the North Atlantic. The *Encounter* patrolled the Pacific from Fiji eastwards and northwards. One submarine was lost, the other at work in the eastern Mediterranean. Even the old *Pioneer,* after months of patrol off the Western Australian coast, had been called away to aid in the capture of German East Africa. The *Una* was busy in the occupied islands. Only the three destroyers on the Queensland coast were left to remind Australians that they ever had a navy of their own.

[27] Portion of the mess plate of the *Scharnhorst* and *Leipzig* was found in Australia after the war. As an act of grace it was returned by the Australian Government tc the Government of Germany.

[28] The *Dresden* had for months been violating Chilean neutrality, and was still doing so when the British ships met her. The local Chilean authorities were powerless to prevent this, and consequently the British were forced to sink her in Chilean waters, committing thereby a formal breach of neutrality.

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CHAPTER VI

THE CONVOYS AND THE *EMDEN*

In making a continuous story of the Australian Navy's work among the German Pacific islands we have considerably outrun our chronology. We must go back on our tracks for nearly a year to take up the narrative of the first Australian convoy, and of the light cruisers' doings after they were detached from Admiral Patey's command in October, 1914.

The offer of a contingent of 20,000 men for service outside Australia, made on the 3rd of August by the Federal Government, was intended to come into effect immediately. The contingent was organised at high speed during August, its equipment manufactured or purchased, and the vessels that were to convey it overseas transformed from merchantmen into transports and assembled at the ports of departure.[1] The military authorities, indeed, had suggested sending off the slower vessels, conveying horses, on dates beginning with the 26th or thereabouts, allowing the quicker infantry transports to catch them up *en route;* but the Admiralty, in view of our ignorance of the position of the German warships in the Indian Ocean, refused to let any transports leave without an escort[2]—and escorts would not be available until the little *Psyche* and *Philomel* returned to New Zealand from Samoa, and the *Sydney* and *Melbourne* to Australia from New Guinea.

The problem of this escort, which occupied much of the Admiralty's thought in the early days of the war, was simplified by the entry of Japan. It was now proposed that the New Zealand troops should leave Wellington on the 20th of September, under escort of the small cruisers, and join the Australians off Adelaide, the combined forces being then escorted by the *Sydney* and *Melbourne* viâ Fremantle, Colombo, Aden, Suez to Europe. On the 8th of September,

[1] For details of this work and convoy orders *see ch. xiii and Appendix No. 16.* An account of the military work on board is given in *Vol. I, pp. 87 and 99 et seq.*

[2] The Admiralty found that the War Office was authorising New Zealand troops to embark, and was led to protest that this was Admiralty business, and no transports were to move without escort. Australia was informed that escorts could be provided on 7 October and six weeks later.

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as nothing had yet been heard of Count von Spee's squadron, Admiral Jerram was informed that, unless it was accounted for by the end of the month, the *Minotaur* and *Hampshire* must be sent to the Cocos Islands to guard the contingents as far as Colombo. Two days later Admiral Patey was informed that the *Australia* must accompany the convoy; the *Minotaur* was for the time being held back.

The first response of the Dominion Governments to these proposals was willing in the extreme. The Australian Government on the 14th promised that twenty-seven transports should be assembled in King George's Sound[3] by the 5th of October. The New Zealand Government on the 13th of September agreed that their transports should leave on the 25th, but suggested that they should be taken direct to Fremantle by the three small cruisers *Philomel, Psyche,* and *Pyramus.* On the 14th, however, the big German cruisers appeared off Apia and left it steering north-west, and the *Emden's* first exploits in the Bay of Bengal came to light. The effect on the New Zealand Government was immediate. Even before it got the news from Apia, it had "expressed considerable uneasiness"—to quote the Governor of the Dominion—and its doubts were "not entirely allayed" by references to earlier Admiralty messages.

The risk now seemed much more serious. Of the prospective escort, the *Hampshire* had been ordered off to find the *Emden;* the *Australia* and *Sydney* were held in the Pacific to stand guard over the Rabaul expedition; and only the *Melbourne* was on its way south to cover the Australian transports. It is true that, instead of the Australian Squadron, the Admiralty ordered the *Minotaur* with the powerful Japanese cruiser *Ibuki*[4] to meet the convoy at Fremantle on the 4th of October. This might ensure safe voyage across the Indian Ocean; but, with the German

[3] Fremantle, while convenient as a point of departure, was quite inadequate as an assembly area. King George's Sound filled all requirements. Telegrams from the Admiralty continued to refer (by mistake) to Fremantle as the place of assembly.

[4] The *Ibuki* had been placed by the Japanese Government at the disposal of Admiral Jerram in return for the despatch of the *Triumph* (a less powerful ship) to Tsingtao (*see p. 19*). The *Ibuki* (which was a battle-cruiser within the meaning of the Washington treaty) was after the war sunk, like H.M.A.S. *Australia,* in fulfilment of that agreement. A model of this fine ship and certain of her relics, presented by the Japanese Government to that of Australia in memory of the co-operation of their forces, stand in the Australian War Memorial. The Australian Government presented Japan with the binnacle of H.M.A.S. *Australia.*

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squadron now possibly within striking distance, the waters between New Zealand and Australia might be dangerous, and for traversing them the New Zealand force had been given no better escort than three small "P-class" cruisers. The Governor of New Zealand telegraphed that feeling in that dominion ran high, and that several Ministers threatened to resign if the Admiralty insisted on this course. The Admiralty could not, however, recall the *Australia*—the only powerful ship within reach—without laying the Australian attack upon New Guinea, then in progress, open to a counter-attack which, in the Admiralty's view, was the one object that might conceivably bring von Spee towards Australasia. There had indeed been overheard a German wireless message directing a collier to New Guinea; but that the German squadron should steam 2,000 miles south "into waters where (there is) no possible coal for them" seemed to the Admiralty "incredible." They therefore, through the Colonial Office, urged this view upon the New Zealand Government, and informed it that the route of its transports was perfectly safe without escort. No strong naval force was then available, and, if New Zealand insisted upon having one, its troops must wait for the Second Convoy to Europe six weeks later; meanwhile the Australian contingent would sail alone on the date arranged.

In view of these messages and in spite of a warning cable from the Australian Naval Board—"Remember that the armoured German cruisers are at large and unlocated"—the New Zealand Government decided to send its transports at once with their diminutive escorts. Two of them had actually left Auckland on the 24th of September, escorted by the *Philomel,* and the remainder were to sail next day, when a new occurrence profoundly affected the situation. This was the receipt by the Governor of New Zealand of a telegram from the Governor-General of Australia informing him of the latter's private opinion that the New Zealand transports ran a grave risk, and should not sail until the Admiralty had been consulted.

The explanation of this cablegram—although the Australian Government was unaware of its despatch—lay in the growing uneasiness felt by the new Australian Ministry

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at the possibility, however remote, of the enemy sinking unescorted transports and thereby inflicting not only tragic loss, but such a shock as might destroy Australian faith in the Admiralty and enormously increase the difficulty of smooth co-operation throughout the remainder of the war. The Fisher Government had taken office three days after the German cruisers had left Samoa, and anxiety concerning the transports had never been absent from its mind. Andrew Fisher himself was a man of extreme caution, and he was intensely anxious not only to give the Empire all possible help, but to prevent any occurrence that might harmfully affect the nerves or zeal of Australians. He had conjured up a picture of thirty thousand young untried men afloat, of enemy cruisers dashing in to sink them, of Australia, unused to war, shocked and angered. At so early a stage, he felt, the sinking of a transport from preventable causes might push Australia practically out of the war for many months.

With these views his Ministers and the Governor-General, Sir Ronald Craufurd Munro Ferguson, entirely agreed. In Sir Ronald's opinion, the destruction of these transports—especially of the whole thirty-eight after their assembly in Australian waters—was much the most important stroke that Germany could effect in the Pacific. He knew of the Prime Minister's belief—that it was an excessive risk to bring troops without escort from New Zealand or even round the Australian coast. On the 22nd of September, since the German cruisers might then be approaching the coast, Fisher and the new Minister for Defence, Senator Pearce, visited the Navy Office. They mistrusted the opinion, urged by one of the staff, that the enemy could not coal in the open sea; and the outcome was that—although General Bridges, who commanded the troops, throughout urged strongly that the transports should sail—Cabinet, on the recommendation of the Naval Board, decided in favour of a precautionary delay. A warning telegram (that of the 22nd of September) was sent to New Zealand. The Australian troopship *Geelong* was at first held up in Port Phillip on her way to Hobart, and then directed to proceed by the west coast of Tasmania instead of

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by the usual route; and other Australian transports were warned that they put out of harbour at their own risk. On the 24th the following telegram was sent to London:

> We have no definite information locating *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* since September 14, when they were sighted off Apia. Commonwealth Government ask do you think it safe to begin moving transports independently from eastern ports to Albany without escort.

But about the same time the Governor-General, apparently in accordance with a request from the Colonial Office, had telegraphed to it privately his personal view. This, he believed, would determine the British Government to stop the transports from sailing, but it would not be in time to hold up certain New Zealand transports due to leave early on the 24th. On his own initiative, therefore, he sent to New Zealand the message already referred to.

Its effect there was immediate. The *Philomel* and her two transports were recalled. The impression made upon the authorities clearly was that the German cruisers might, even then, be in the Tasman Sea. They telegraphed to the Admiralty:

> Departure of New Zealand expedition had been delayed on account of telegram received by Governor of New Zealand from Governor-General of Australia who considers Tasman Sea may not be safe. *Pyramus* is on way to Melbourne, and it is considered safer for her to continue than to stop her by using wireless telegraphy.

It will be seen that Sir Ronald had in this matter acted not as a Governor-General, advised by his Ministers, but as an influential citizen of the Empire, informing its officials in England and New Zealand of his personal view. He saw that the Governments of the two Dominions might be constrained by their loyalty to acquiesce in a course which they, and he, believed to be fraught with disastrous possibilities—and all for a strategical object which seemed to him insignificant as compared with the preservation of the Empire's whole-hearted unity. In this crisis he acted on his own responsibility; and, though the event proved his action needless, it would not therefore be safe to contend that its motive was unsound. Whatever the Germans may have thought in 1914, there will probably be little disagreement today with the contention that no stroke open to them in the Pacific could have approached in effectiveness a successful descent upon the first Australian

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and New Zealand transports. We now know that a raid into Australian waters was only one of the less important of the possible tasks laid down for the German squadron, and that it had been discarded by Count von Spee, who—it is practically certain—was unaware of the existence of the contingents. But, had he heard even as much as subsequently did the *Emden,* his decision might have been different.

To return to the arrangements for the convoy. The Admiralty, on hearing that New Zealand had stopped her transports, was in the dark as to the precise chain of events which had led to this action; but it was clear that a concession must be made to local feeling. It should be remembered that—so far at least as Australia was concerned—"local feeling" was, throughout this episode, merely the feeling in Government circles, or a forecast by the authorities of what the people would feel; for the censorship concerning naval movements was absolute, and the vast majority even of well-instructed Australians had no notion of the existence of these problems, or of when the transports were to sail or to what ports or with what escort. The Admiralty's reply, sent both to Australia and New Zealand was:

> Admiralty adhere to opinion despatch of transports from New Zealand and Australian ports to point of concentration at Fremantle is an operation free from undue risk; but, in view of anxiety felt by your Ministers and Government of Australian Commonwealth, they propose to send *Minotaur* and *Ibuki* to Wellington to fetch New Zealand convoy and escort it westward along Australian coast, picking up Australian transports on way and bringing the whole to their destination. This will involve about three weeks' delay.

Whatever the Dominion Governments might have consented to do, if pressed, this telegram was received with grateful relief by those among the Ministers whose anxiety had been so deeply stirred. In spite of a strong protest from General Bridges,[5] the Australian Cabinet cancelled all embarkation orders, the Admiralty being informed in the following telegram:

> Several troopships have already started from eastern States and all arrangements are complete for others to leave in time to concentrate Western Australia on date originally fixed by Admiralty. In view of your cablegram troopships at sea will be brought to Melbourne and departure of others delayed pending further instructions from Admiralty.

[5] *See Vol. I, pp. 91-2.*

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In accordance with this decision all transports that could be reached were ordered to the nearest Australian port, and the *Melbourne,* then in Port Jackson, was sent southwards along the coast to round up any stragglers. By the end of the month every transport was in harbour, awaiting orders to proceed. Meanwhile the Admiralty hurried forward the *Minotaur* and *Ibuki,* which managed to reach Fremantle on the 29th of September (instead of the 4th of October) and Hobart nine days later.

In connection with this visit there occurred an incident that should not be forgotten. Knowing that Australians were somewhat sensitive about the use of Japanese warships on the Australian coast, the officer commanding the *Minotaur* thought it wise to make certain enquiries in advance:—

Request information as to whether Japanese cruiser *Ibuki,* on arrival in company with the *Minotaur* at Australian ports, would be expected to salute the flag—observing that *Minotaur* is senior officer.

The answer of the Naval Board, drafted by Admiral Creswell, was:—

Commonwealth Naval Board consider active service in alliance with our flag and in company with a senior naval officer flying our flag is a mark of respect to British Empire higher than any salute.

And, responding to this *beau geste,* the captain of the *Ibuki* replied:—

Allow me to express to Naval Board on behalf of Japanese Navy my deep appreciation of the friendly action so fittingly expressed in their telegram to captain of *Minotaur.* We are grateful to Providence for the honour of co-operating with our Allies in the restoration of the peace of the world, and trust Providence will further honour us with an opportunity of co-operating actively, and to some effect, in the defence of a common interest in Far Eastern waters.

The holding up of the transports in Australian ports was objectionable to both the naval and the military authorities. Consequently, as soon as the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* were again located (by the news, received on the 30th of September, that they had raided Papeete on the 22nd of September), the Naval Board tried to hasten the departure of the contingents by a fresh suggestion to the Admiralty:—

Submitted for consideration of Vice-Admiral Commanding and Admiralty that *Melbourne* and New Zealand cruisers should form a screen between north of New Zealand and Green Cape. New Zealand transports to proceed to Port Phillip independently.

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A second cable, apparently sent on the same day, asked:—

> Does Admiralty consider that report of *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* having been at Papeete on 22 September alters conditions sufficiently to permit of sailing of transports?

By this time, one imagines, the Admiralty was beginning to lose patience. Their reply of the 4th of October was almost snappy:—

> Admiralty have stated that the transports conveying home the New Zealand and Australian military forces can safely assemble at the point of concentration. Report if this is being done, and date of sailings, and escort. *Minotaur* and *Ibuki* are available in Australian waters for escort to convoy across Indian Ocean with *Melbourne*.

In Australia no further delay was anticipated after this definite statement, and orders were at once given to resume the voyages of transports to the point of concentration. Beyond this nothing could be done without New Zealand. New Zealand was, of course, closer to the enemy; but that enemy had now been heard of 2,300 miles away, and the risk of his near approach was obviously negligible. However, the New Zealand Ministry was immovable. Both Admiralty and Colonial Office assured them that there was no danger in the Tasman Sea; when they asked for a fuller explanation of the Admiralty's message of the 4th, the reply was explicit:—

> Telegram 112 intended to convey to you that Admiralty consider expedition can embark and proceed immediately with "P" class cruisers' escort to join Australian expedition at Port Adelaide or other convenient port, and meet *Minotaur*, the latter not proceeding Wellington. Desirable expedition leave as soon as possible to fit in with escort after Suez.

But the New Zealand Government was not moved by this assurance. "In spite of Admiralty telegrams," was the reply, "Ministers still seem very averse to expedition sailing without stronger escort than 'P' class cruisers." When the Australian Government took a hand, and wired that they were taking immediate action on the Admiralty message of the 4th, the New Zealand Prime Minister replied:

> Great public anxiety felt. . . . I gave assurance that the ships should not go until the escort should arrive. . . . My Government expects good faith to be kept as regards escort. . . . May I ask for your assistance in view of public feeling here, and knowing that powerful German men-of-war are still at large. We could not consent to vessels setting out without sufficiency of protection against the enemy.

So the whole convoy was held up for a few weeks longer.

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II

During those weeks further minor complications arose. It had been proposed in the earlier plan that the *Minotaur* and *Ibuki* should be joined at Fremantle by another Japanese cruiser, the *Nisshin*. On the 12th of October, however, she ran aground and damaged herself too badly to be of use for the next five weeks; the Japanese Government offered a substitute, but none was near enough to meet the convoy this side of the Cocos group; and, though the really dangerous area lay beyond that group, where the *Emden* was at large, the situation south of it was not so satisfactory that risks could be lightly taken. It is probable, too, that the Admiralty was all the more careful to ensure a strong escort across the Indian Ocean because it had been insisting on the adequacy of a weak one across the Tasman Sea. So, though the Japanese offer was provisionally accepted, enquiries were made as to the possible usefulness of the little *Pioneer,* and in the end it was decided to recall the *Sydney*[6] from Admiral Patey's command and add her to the escort.

At last, then, the arrangements for the convoy took their final shape. On the 16th of October at 7 a.m. the *Minotaur, Ibuki, Philomel,* and *Psyche,* with ten transports in charge, left Wellington for Albany, touching at Hobart on the way. The Naval Board at once issued orders that all Australian transports must reach Albany by the 28th; they proceeded independently, although the *Melbourne* was instructed to cruise off Gabo Island until the last transport from Sydney had safely passed that point. By the 28th the whole Australian convoy—twenty-six vessels, ranging from the 15,000-ton *Euripides* to the 5,000-ton horse-transports—was assembled at the port of concentration, and was on that day joined by the New Zealanders, who had made the utmost possible speed, in spite of heavy weather, when once they were allowed to start.

The *Minotaur,* which now took charge of the whole convoy brought with her disturbing news. The situation in South Africa was very grave; commandos that had been meant to operate against the neighbouring German colony had gone

[6] It is interesting to note that at one time, in order to prevent further delay, an Admiralty message suggested that "*Sydney* might proceed north of Australia and meet convoy off Cocos Island—possibility of her meeting *Emden* en route."

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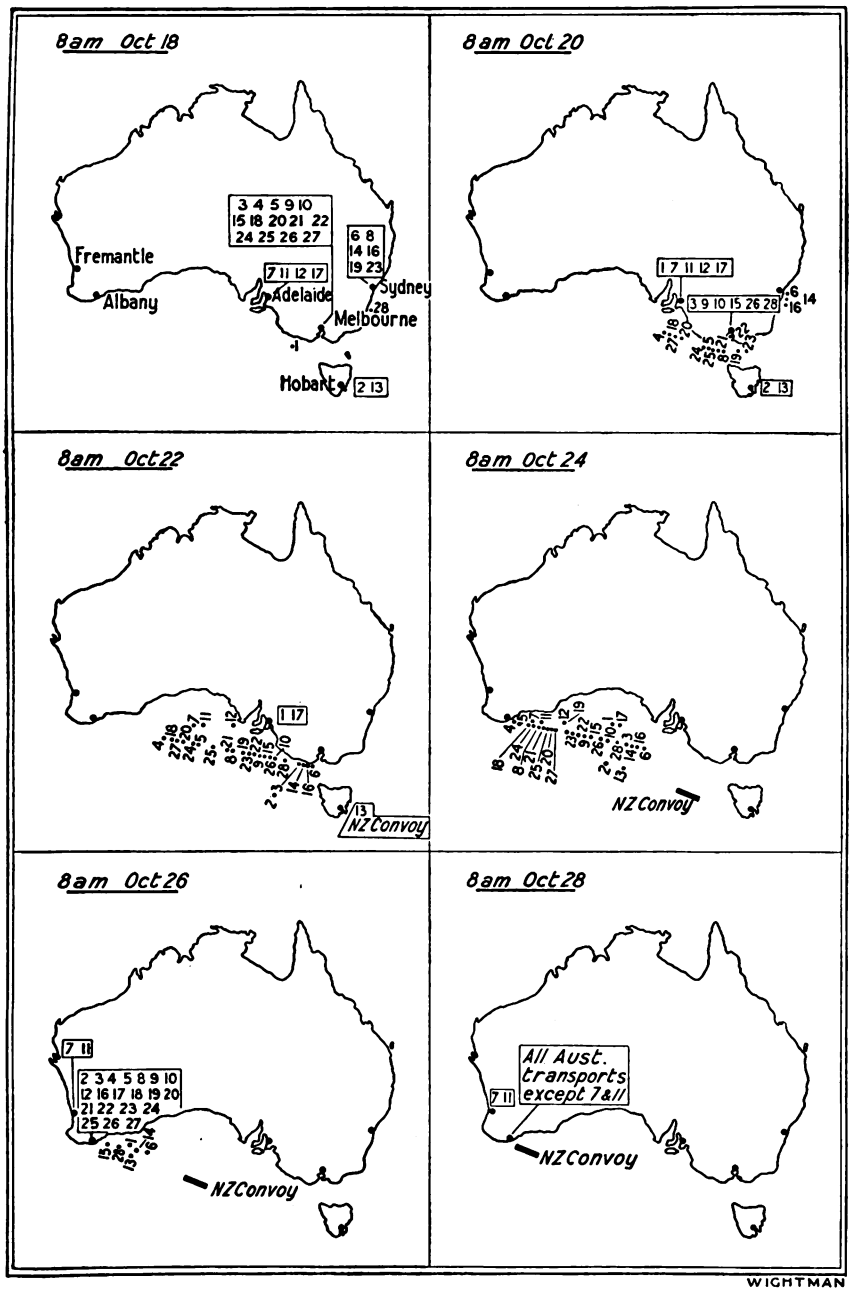

MOVEMENTS OF THE FIRST CONVOY ROUND THE AUSTRALIAN COAST

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over to the enemy, Christian de Wet was collecting a rebel force far inland, and Botha—at once Prime Minister of the Dominion and commander of its military forces—found himself for the moment in an awkward position. The Imperial Government, which could envisage the Empire as a whole, decided that the Australian troops should proceed to Europe by the Cape instead of the Canal route, so that they could be used to reinforce Botha if occasion required it.[7] Accordingly the first business discussed after the *Minotaur's* arrival was the reconstruction of all convoy plans to suit a voyage round South Africa—which incidentally involved the release of the *Ibuki,* owing to the difficulty of getting enough coal for her on the new route. But, just as the Australian leaders were reluctantly resigning themselves to this fresh diversion, news came that Botha had performed his task unaided, and the order for the Cape was annulled from England. It may be noted that, while the Commonwealth Government was kept fully informed of the successive changes of destination, no explanation of the reasons that dictated them ever reached the Cabinet.

So the convoy at last left Australia. As the *Melbourne's* log put it:—

1st November—

6.25 a.m. *Minotaur* and *Sydney* sailed.
6.45 a.m. First Australian Division[8] sailed.
7.15 a.m. Second Australian Division sailed.
7.55 a.m. Third Australian Division sailed.
8.20 a.m. New Zealand Division sailed.
8.53 a.m. All transports clear of Sound.

Upon which the *Melbourne* herself—

8.55 a.m. Weighed anchor and proceeded.

The *Ibuki,* by the bye, had gone ahead to Fremantle to pick up two transports—the *Medic* and *Ascanius*—and joined the convoy on the 3rd.

The sailing order of the convoy was simple. Five miles ahead of the rest moved the *Minotaur,* alert and stately. The Australian transports followed in three lines abreast; in the

[7] This would not have been the first help given by the Commonwealth to the Union. It furnished Botha a little earlier with 10,000,000 rounds of rifle ammunition. Some account of the Australian share in the work of furnishing military and other supplies will be given in *Vol. XI.*

[8] "Division" is here used in the naval sense, meaning a division of the convoy.

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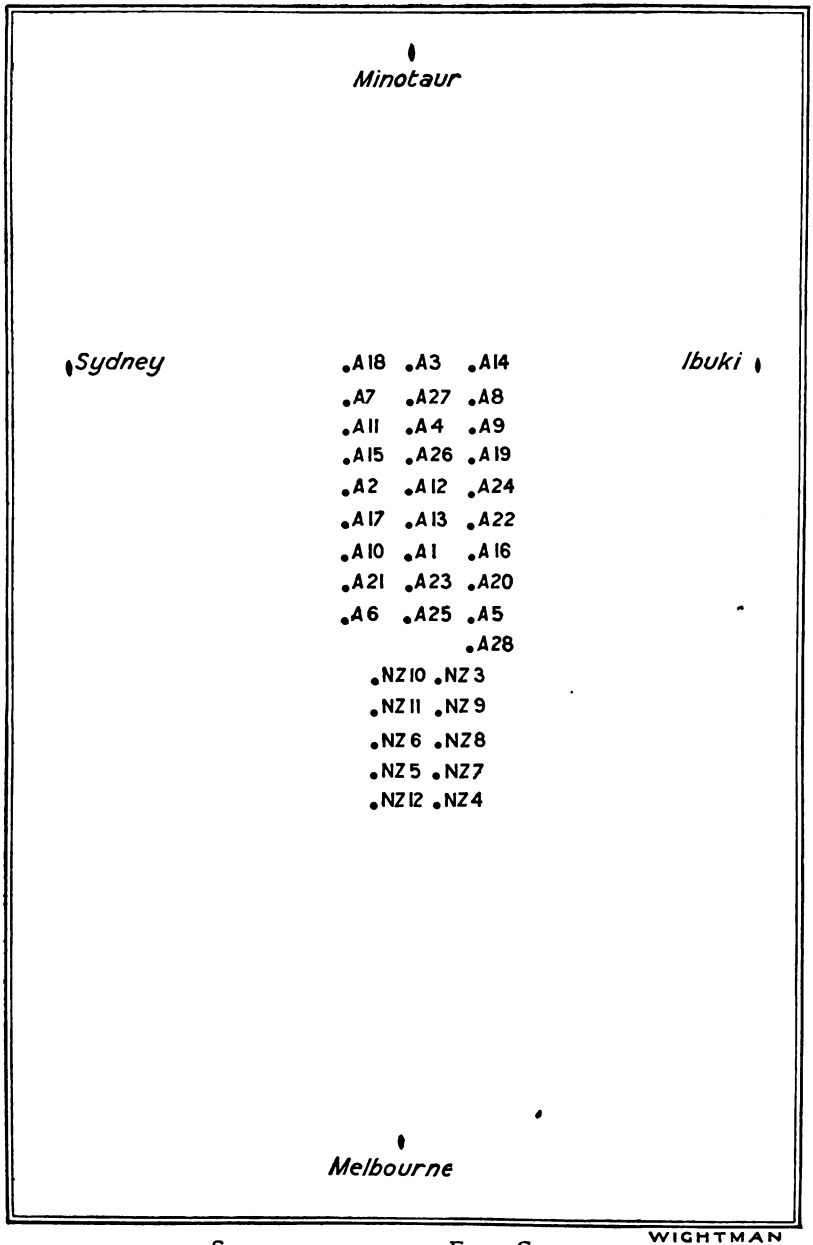
Map No. 10



WIGHTMAN

SAILING ORDER OF THE FIRST CONVOY

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centre the great *Orvieto,* carrying the headquarters staff of the Australian troops, and followed by eight small vessels, mostly horse-transports, of from 10 to 12 knots' speed; on her right the *Euripides,* with nine large 13- to 15-knot vessels in her train; on her left the *Wiltshire,* with eight followers, whose speed ranged from 12 to 13 knots. Each vessel was about 800 yards from the nearest ship in her line, and a mile from her nearest neighbour in the parallel line. Behind the Australians came the New Zealand transports, ten of them in two lines similarly disposed. Four miles out from the *Euripides* the *Ibuki,* marked throughout the voyage by her heavy overhanging plume of smoke; four miles from the *Wiltshire* hovered the *Sydney;* far astern of all the *Melbourne* kept guard. The *Orvieto,* under instructions from the *Minotaur,* set the course and speed for the whole convoy; but the pace was further conditioned by the slow transport *Southern,* a barely 10-knot boat, since in dangerous waters no vessel could be allowed to lag behind the rest.[9]

To obey these orders was not altogether an easy task. The masters of the transports were merchant seamen, used to independent movement, and it took them some time to accustom themselves to slow speeds and regular station-keeping. Nor could passenger steamers easily habituate themselves to the very necessary suppression of lights at night. According to the regulation no lights must "be shewn outside ship except oil side-lights and a shaded stern-light," but an eye-witness has described some of the larger vessels as "twinkling like floating hotels." On the 5th of November, when already half-way to the Cocos, the *Minotaur* found it necessary to issue the following order:—

> The attention of masters of Australian transports is again drawn to the extreme importance of keeping accurate station, especially at night. During last night the Second Division straggled to seven miles, whereas their distance should have been three miles. The Third Division straggled to six miles, whereas their distance should have been three and a half miles. By this careless station-keeping masters expose their ships to an increased risk of being torpedoed by an enemy, and also involve the New Zealand convoy in the same danger. The New Zealand convoy are keeping station at three cables apart

[9] General Bridges, however, urged that all troops except non-combatants (field ambulance) should be removed from the *Southern,* and that she should then be left behind to proceed at her own speed.

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in excellent order,[10] and their great attention to the convoy orders as regards the reduction of power of lights merits my warm approval. The *Medic* and *Geelong* were signalling last night with lights visible at least ten miles. I again point out the necessity of reducing power of lights by blue bunting or other means.

So the great fleet, comprising four warships with thirty-eight transports in charge, voyaged towards its tiny enemy like an elephant timidly approaching the dreaded mouse. No more conspicuous example could be given or imagined of naval power and its limitations, of the overwhelming need of warships to the Empire, and its defencelessness without their dominance throughout the oceans. One enemy cruiser, smaller and weaker than any of the four in the convoy's escort, could force not only the use of all the four, but the spreading over the Indian Ocean of nine more; for at this moment the Japanese *Yahagi* and *Chikuma,* the Russian *Askold,* and the British *Hampshire, Yarmouth, Weymouth, Gloucester, Empress of Russia,* and *Empress of Asia* were all being directed on the *Emden,* while other Japanese warships were drawing down towards the southern and western sea-passages of the Malay Archipelago.

III

It is worth considering here what this little cruiser was, and what she had done, that squadrons attended on her movements and an army afloat went delicately as it neared her. Her story has been frequently written in German, and translated into English, but is repeated here since it so intimately concerned Australians. The fact that the account which follows was based partly upon material only available in Australia may add to its interest.[11]

[10] While the discipline of the New Zealanders deserved the heartiest commendation, it must not be forgotten that they had a much longer experience of convoy conditions, having been under the *Minotaur's* orders since the 16th of October.

[11] Narratives of the *Emden's* career have been written by her Captain, von Müller, by Lieutenant von Mücke, who escaped in the *Ayesha,* by Prince Franz Josef of Hohenzollern, and by Captain von R. Witthoeft, who were among her officers. The most authoritative is that in the German Official Naval History (*Der Krieg Zur See—Der Kreuzerkrieg, Vol. II*). There exist in Australia, however, certain data possessing an additional interest inasmuch as they were compiled at the time of the events. These are—

(1) The *Emden's* signal log, discovered on board the wrecked ship by Commr. M. B. Baillie-Hamilton, R.N., when in command of H.M.S. *Empress of Japan,* and now in the Australian War Memorial Library (only for dates between October 16 and November 8, 1914).

(2) Sketch-map shewing the *Emden's* track and captures from July 31 to November 9, drawn by a prisoner interned at Singapore and afterwards at Holdsworthy—probably one of the officers transferred from the *Emden* to the *Exford* on November 8, as it also shews the *Exford's* track while in German hands.

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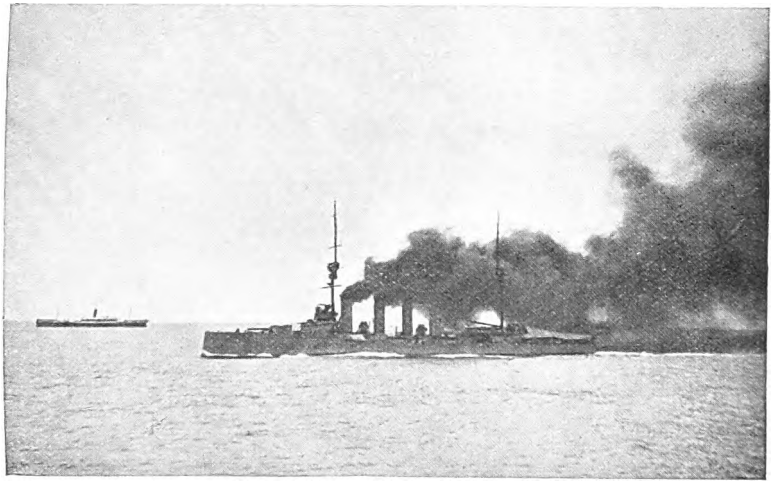
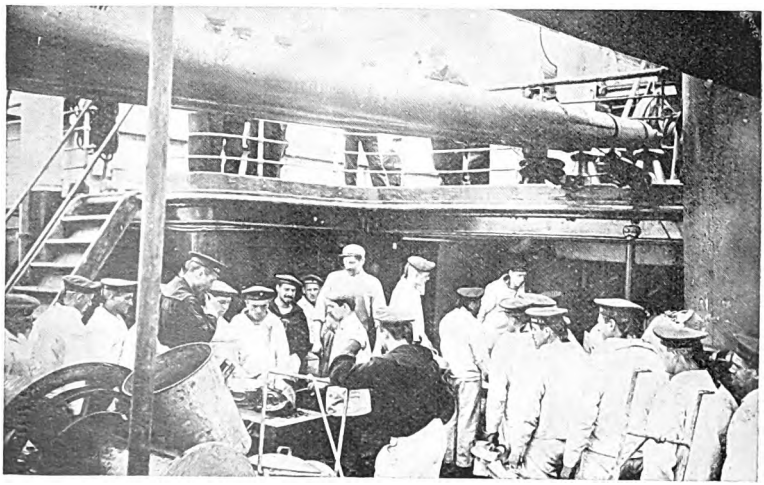


H.M.S. *Minotaur*

Photograph taken in the Indian Ocean in November 1914, while she was escorting the First Convoy. The troopship *Euripides* is seen in the background.

Aust. War Memorial Official Photo. No. G1549.



OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE *Emden*

Given to Leading Telegraphist D. F. Herlihy, R.A.N., by a prisoner from the "Emden."

Aust. War Memorial Collection No. EN233.

To face p. 165.

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The *Emden* was a light cruiser of 3,600 tons burden and 24½ knots speed, built at Danzig and commissioned in the autumn of 1908. Her armament consisted of ten 4.1-in. guns, and her crew numbered 361. At the end of July 1914 she was lying in Tsingtao Harbour, and on the 30th—the captain having privately told his officers the latest news—was put into fighting trim, ostensibly for practice. On the 31st she left Tsingtao, commanded by Captain von Müller, to cruise in Korea Strait, thus avoiding the risk of being shut up in harbour. Definite news of the outbreak of war between Germany and Russia reached her on the 3rd of August, and she made at once for the passage between Tsushima and Japan, intending by a raid upon the trade route between Shanghai and Vladivostock, and possibly by intercepting the *Askold,* to draw her opponents away from Tsingtao. Almost immediately, however, in the early morning of the 4th, she met and captured the Russian "volunteer cruiser" *Riasan,* a brand-new steamer of 3,500 tons, capable of being transformed into an auxiliary warship (though she had not yet been so transformed). Upon learning that night that England was in the war Captain von Müller decided, in order to safeguard his prize and avoid enemy ships, of which several were seen or suspected in the neighbourhood, to make back round the point of Korea to Tsingtao, which he reached early on the 6th. The *Riasan* was promptly stripped of her mercantile fittings, armed, manned with a German crew and re-named *Cormoran,* the old, small gunboat of that name being laid up in Tsingtao and afterwards sunk in the harbour.

The *Emden* was now ordered by von Spee to join the rest of the squadron. Accordingly, twelve hours after handing over her first prize, she set out again with the auxiliary

(3) Diary of Petty Officer Plotz, who was a prisoner in the transport *Orvieto* after the fight—unfortunately not in its original state, but much enlarged and padded from conversations between him and the prisoner-guard.

(4) Diary of a German naval reservist (name probably Richard Fruicht) who served in the *Emden* from the 6th of August to the 16th of September—carefully kept, and obtained from the same source that supplied the sketch-map mentioned above.

The signal log is of course authoritative when available. The sketch-map is the most detailed and complete, and shows evidence of having been compiled from the *Emden's* own log. The signal log translation was made by the Admiralty War Staff; it has here been checked occasionally by reference to the original. The translations of (2) and (4) were made by the present writer.

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cruiser *Prinz Eitel Friedrich* and the collier *Markomannia* for the rendezvous at Pagan in the Mariannes. Soon after starting she held up the Japanese mail steamer *Sakaki Maru,* but let her go, merely "jamming" her attempts to signal the incident by wireless; Japan was not yet a belligerent. On the 12th Pagan was reached, and next day the whole naval fighting force was assembled.[12] As already stated, at 5 p.m. on the 13th the fleet left Pagan, and at 8 a.m. next day the *Emden,* with her special collier the *Markomannia,* parted company from the rest and made south-westwards towards Malaysia. Off Angaur on the 19th she coaled, and took aboard several reservists from the mail-steamer *Prinzess Alice.* That night when the *Emden* and her collier continued their cruise the *Prinzess Alice* was ordered to follow as provision ship; but during the night she took a wrong course, and was consequently sent back to the Philippines. Next day, being in wireless touch with the little warship *Geier* (which until the 18th had not received official news that Britain was in the war), von Müller diverged from his course to meet that vessel and exchange news with her; after which the *Emden* made for the Molucca Passage.[13] This strait she passed in the night of the 22nd, and kept on almost due south to the eastern end of Timor, where she missed an expected collier, but again coaled from the *Markomannia* (under shelter of the island of Nusa Bessi) on the 25th.

Up to this time she had sighted no vessels except the two Germans already mentioned and a Japanese vessel in the Molucca Passage. But on the 27th, when vainly searching for another collier at a rendezvous off Djampea Island, north of Flores, she saw the Dutch warship *Tromp* steaming out of a bay. The *Emden* anchored. The *Tromp* did likewise, and visits were exchanged. The captain of the *Tromp* informed von Müller that he had found the *Emden's* collier and sent her back to Sourabaya. He made it clear that Holland did not wish her islands to be used as a base by either combatant. The information obtained from him was

[12] *See pp. 28-9.* The *Markomannia* did not arrive until the afternoon of the 13th.
[13] The reservist has here a queer entry: "21/8. Passed a still active volcano." One can only imagine that the natives on Nevil Island were holding a midnight corroboree.

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on the whole not favourable; and on the previous day, von Müller had heard of Japan's entry into the war. One of the crew noted:—

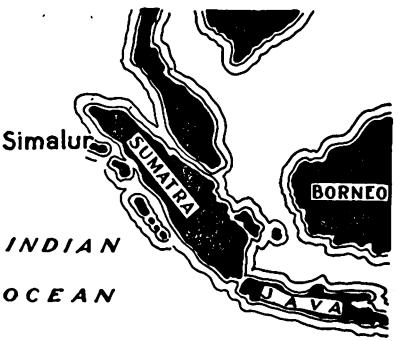
In the afternoon the first officer, von Mücke, told us the news; so we heard that Japan also had declared war on Germany, and we all thought it was now quite impossible for Germany to win with three Great Powers attacking us. When the news had been announced, a voice from the back said, "Where are we and the *Emden* going?" "I don't know myself; but first we'll get some provisions out of the English."

The next day, the 28th, was a critical one for them:—

On going to night defence stations we were informed that in the night of 28-29 August we should be passing through a strait between Lombok and Bali, and that we should most probably meet the enemy there, as the strait would be watched by his vessels. So we lay there, our hopes strung to a high pitch, peering into the darkness by the guns. There would have been no chance of escape; it was perfectly clear to all of us that we were lost if we could not get through. We went straight for it at top speed, got through without accident, and thought to ourselves what fools the English were. For to deceive the enemy (the English call it "bluff") we had made for the *Emden* a fourth funnel out of sailcloth, and consequently when seen in the dusk were often taken for an English cruiser. So then we set forward again, not knowing where we were going; and in a short time the land disappeared from view.

For one more peaceful week the *Emden* skirted the shores of Java and Sumatra, keeping far out of sight of land,[14] until on the 4th of September she ran in under the lee of Simalur, an island off the north-western side of Sumatra, and coaled and re-provisioned from the *Markomannia*. The crew fell in love with this little island —"this charming spot," the reservist calls it:—

We should probably have stayed longer, but a Dutch Government vessel came along and ordered us to leave the harbour at once, as we had already been there more than twenty-four hours. . . . It was certainly hard lines that that Government steamer came along; if it hadn't we should have had a little rest after our hard work.



[14] Only that precaution saved her. The *Hampshire* was at Simalur on the 3rd, looking for the *Königsberg*, and passed southwards along the chain of islands as the *Emden* came up outside them.

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Then at last business began:—

8/9. Cruised about slowly on the steamer-track between Colombo and Calcutta to capture and destroy enemy merchant-vessels. The first officer told the boys, "Now we'll soon have something to stow away—soap first, so that you can wash your clothes." For we had run out of soap—and no wonder, seeing we had been for so long all upside down with coal-muck.

This same first officer, von Mücke, was a notable Anglophobe. When the prize crew went aboard their first prize, the *Pontoporos* (a Greek steamer under English charter),

we were equipped with revolver, ammunition, and side-arms, and had to report to the first officer, who gave us plenty of orders how to behave on the steamer. "The main thing," he said, "is to shoot down without further ado anyone who resists you," for nobody was so exasperated against the English as our first officer was. I was a good second; I was quite knocked out (*es krippelte mir*) whenever I saw one of the hounds within reach.

From the 10th of September onwards the *Emden's* doings were soon made public property, for on that day she initiated a career not easily paralleled in naval history. Darting back and forth across some of the most frequented trade-routes in the world, hunted up and down by bigger cruisers of three allied nations, she kept herself unhurt and undiscoverable for two months—while within six weeks she captured or sank twenty-one vessels, of nearly a hundred thousand tons in all, besides indulging in a bombardment of Madras and a raid on warships at anchor in Penang Harbour. It is hardly to be wondered at that her officers sentimentalised over her to the extent of writing poetry:—

"Schiff ohne Hafen, Schiff ohne Ruh,
Fliegende, fliegende *Emden* Du!

. . . . . .

Kannst ja nicht sterben, es jagt daher
Ewig dein Schatten über das Meer."[15]

Even the reservist—who was a very poor poet, whatever other good qualities he had—made verse about her in Singapore gaol.

[15] Contrast this genuine and excellent emotion with the best that our Admiralty Laureate, Sir Henry Newbolt, was able to evoke about the *Sydney*—a piece of verse (incidentally very unfair to the *Emden*) which attributes to our Australian gunners this extraordinary feat:—

"Their hearts were hot, and, as they shot,
They sang like kangaroos!"

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Whatever may be our estimate of the German Navy's performance in the Great War, any navy might be proud of the *Emden*. As has already been said, if the *Cormoran* or the *Prinz Eitel Friedrich* had taken one-tenth of her chances, Australians might have had bitter memories of the early months, and Australian contingents have played a less memorable part on Gallipoli.

Striking the Colombo-Calcutta trade-route on the 9th she picked up the Greek steamer *Pontoporos* soon after dark the same night, the British *Indus* in the morning, the *Lovat* next day, *Kabinga* and *Killin* two nights later, *Diplomat* at noon on the 13th, and late on the 14th the *Trabboch* and *Clan Mathieson*. Of these the *Pontoporos* and *Kabinga* were kept, the former because she was a neutral (carrying English coal, which was of course confiscated), the latter because, though English, she carried a partly American cargo. All the rest were sunk,[16] the crews being transferred either to the *Markomannia* or to the *Kabinga*.

Shortly after sinking the *Diplomat*, the *Emden* sighted an Italian vessel, the *Loredano*, caught her up and requested her captain to take the prisoners with him to Calcutta. The Italian at first refused, and, when on further request he consented, it was too late to carry out the transfer before night. As Italy was still outside the war, the *Loredano* could not be detained; but von Müller was quite sure that she would report the *Emden's* doings the very moment she got into touch with Calcutta. He therefore decided that after one day on the Madras-Calcutta route on which he had made the two latest captures, he must abandon this fruitful area. With this intention immediately after capturing the *Trabboch* he transferred all the prisoners to the *Kabinga*, which was sent off to the Hooghly. Then, shortly before midnight on the 14th, he turned away towards Rangoon. On the 16th the *Emden* coaled from the *Pontoporos* at sea, and sent her, in charge of a German officer, to a rendezvous west of Simalur. On the 18th, having run up into the Gulf of Martaban, the *Emden* caught the Norwegian *Dovre*, and sent her to Rangoon with the prisoners from the *Clan Mathieson*.

[16] In the *Indus* they seem to have discovered an unusual type of master. When the vessel was sunk, according to the reservist "her captain and his officers took off their caps; 'it is a beautiful but sad sight,' said the captain, 'to see one's vessel and all her valuables sink into the deep.'"

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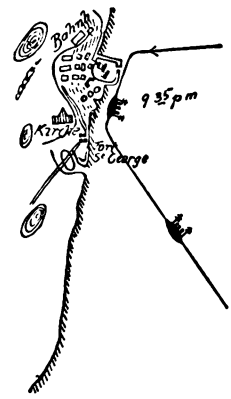
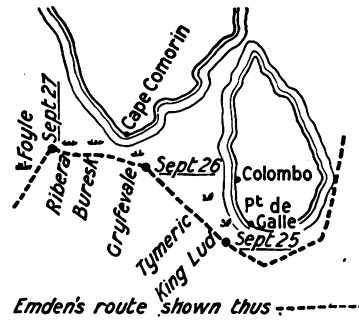
This action of course made known her presence in that area, and immediate departure became necessary. On the other hand, information from the *Dovre* and intercepted wireless signals (most incautiously made by officials in India) disclosed to von Müller the fact that two or three cruisers were searching for him to the southward. He therefore made a sharp turn, coaled from the *Markomannia* near Preparis Island, and went straight across the Bay of Bengal to Madras, where on the night of the 22nd he bombarded and fired the great oil-tanks. All Bay waters were now unsafe; he slipped down past Pondicherry and Cuddalore ("but there," says von Mücke, "nothing was doing"), and put well out to sea round Ceylon, thus escaping the Japanese *Chikuma,* which was keeping guard off Trincomalee. Deferring for the moment his projected run down to Simalur to coal from the *Pontoporos,* he began on the 25th a new series of captures. The *King Lud,* a vessel in ballast, was sunk off Point de Galle; the *Tymeric,* a British cargo boat full of sugar, was sunk a little after midnight off Colombo; the *Gryfevale* was captured and ordered to follow the *Emden.* The 27th was a better day still; the collier *Buresk*—a very useful prize at the moment—was picked up about half-past one in the morning, the *Ribera* (in ballast) at noon, and the *Foyle* (also in ballast) about six hours later. Just after taking the *Foyle* he held up the Dutch vessel *Djocja,* and, as she held no contraband, had to release her; and for the third time the encounter with a neutral vessel, which was bound



From sketch made by an officer in the *Emden.*



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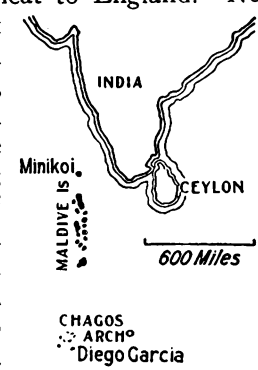
to disclose his whereabouts as soon as she reached port, decided him to abandon his raiding for a time, and disappear into unfrequented ocean areas. The new batch of prisoners was packed into the *Gryfevale* and sent back to Colombo.

IV

The last days of September were spent in the Maldives. In the shelter of one of the atolls the *Emden* emptied her own collier, the *Markomannia,* of coal, and despatched her eastwards to meet the *Pontoporos* at the "charming spot" off Simalur; her orders were to take all the coal that vessel carried, set her free, and call in at Padang to purchase provisions and stores. Meanwhile the *Emden* herself, taking the *Buresk* with her, ran for five days southward till she was well past the Chagos Archipelago, and zigzagged about in that neighbourhood for another three days. His object was a double one—to give his crew some respite in waters in which the search would be less keen, and to intercept the vessels destined for the transport of the Australian and New Zealand contingents (of which he had learned from newspaper reports). He did not expect at this stage to find the convoys *en route* to England, but thought that the ships which had taken Indian troops to the Mediterranean might be returning from Suez to bring the Australians, and hoped to catch this empty convoy on its outward voyage. Failing that he might pick up a cargo-carrier taking frozen meat to England. No ships, however, being sighted[17] he next made for Diego Garcia, the chief island of the group. In that isolated spot, whose inhabitants see visitors once in three months if they are lucky, the outbreak of war was still unknown; they welcomed a visiting warship, of whatever nationality, and coaling from the *Buresk* proceeded amid peaceful and comfortable surroundings. Von Müller had then already decided to raid Penang, but having intercepted a



[17] Captain von Müller's tactics in this neighbourhood were to steam along the Australia-Aden trade route and search the areas where it was intersected by the Mauritius-Calcutta and Mauritius-Colombo routes. The search was without result.

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wireless signal which said "Route Aden-Colombo fairly safe," he decided, before turning east, to revisit that neighbourhood, where he was clearly not expected. He therefore voyaged quietly back along the western coast of the Maldives while the *Hampshire* was scouting down their eastern side; and on the 16th of October, after more than a fortnight's absence from the area of hostilities, the *Emden* began her last series of captures.

Meanwhile two of her colliers had met their fate. As has been said above, the *Pontoporos* was detached on the 16th of September, apparently with orders to make her way back towards Sumatra and hang about Simalur; when questioned she was to hoist Greek colours and carry on. Her voyage was unadventurous, but off Simalur she was much worried by the attentions of two Dutch warships:—

23/9. About 2 p.m. we saw a warship on the horizon which made for us; as it came nearer, we saw that she was the Dutch warship *Seven Provinces,* a protected cruiser. She passed us and went inshore to anchor.

24/9. . . . About 2 p.m. we saw another warship; this was the Dutch protected cruiser *Tromp,* with a destroyer. At 4.30 p.m. these ships approached the *Pontoporos* to find out what our real intentions were. We ran up the Greek flag, but saw that we were being watched through glasses.

25/9. . . . We pottered up and down the coast, watched carefully by the Dutch warships, for they would have very much liked to know what our real intentions were.

Soon after this the Dutch seem to have grown tired, for no further mention is made of them in the reservist's diary. Indeed, nothing of consequence happened till the 6th of October, and the diarist had to fill up with complaints about the food. But on the 6th the *Markomannia* came along, and the transference of coal from the *Pontoporos* began. It was a very slow process; the Greek vessel's crew struck now and then, and had to be kept at work "at the point of the pistol," so that the Germans did not expect to get the coaling over before the 13th. Before that date they were interrupted.

The finale of this episode is worth telling in the reservist's own words. He was no poet, but he had the dramatic instinct:—

12/10. Earlier in the night it happened that the sky was for a long time lit up with searchlights. At 5.30 a.m. we started coaling again. About 6 I saw from the deck a cloud of smoke on the horizon.

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Anticipating no good, I reported it on the bridge, where the captain was. The answer "Oh, let be, man; when it gets nearer we shall find it's a Dutchman!" "Right oh!" said I to myself, "if you're in that sort of a temper . . . !" and I went back to my work.

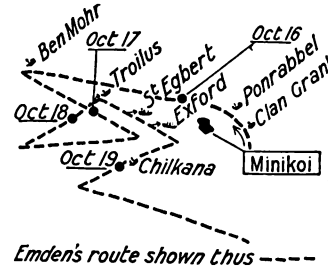
But it struck me that the ship was coming along frightfully fast, and then I saw by the type of it that it must be an English or a Japanese ship. I dropped my work and woke our lieutenant, who was still asleep. By the time he came on deck everyone could see that she was an enemy ship. Now came the order to cast off. We stopped coaling and got our side-arms. Casting off was done at last, but there were many hindrances, for one of the stern-lines got entangled in the screw, so that for five minutes we couldn't move. We were trying to get into neutral waters before the warship could reach us.

The *Markomannia* was well ahead of us when suddenly the warship made the signal "Stop at once or I fire!" Shortly afterwards a shot was fired—then two more, that made the *Markomannia* stop. At that we in the *Pontoporos* had to stop too. The *Yarmouth*, an English cruiser, laid herself between the two vessels, and gave the *Markomannia's* crew ten minutes to abandon ship and transport themselves in their own boats aboard the *Yarmouth*. We Emdenites tried to get a boat clear of the *Pontoporos*, but soon saw that any attempt to escape to land was useless, so we yielded to our fate. Soon we saw a boat coming off to us to take aboard the Emdenites also; then we threw overboard our arms and all the ammunition, so that the English should not get them. (Here I must leave out altogether some things that happened at this time, for it is possible that this book will fall some day into English hands.)

When everybody was aboard the *Yarmouth*, she approached the *Markomannia* and sank her by gunfire. . . .

V

To return to the *Emden*, which we left running up along the western side of the Maldives. In order to coal in shelter she found it necessary to cross on the 14th to the eastern side. Early in the morning of the 16th, when not far from Minikoi, she held up the British steamer *Clan Grant*, from which she took some "most necessary articles, provisions, flour, potatoes, soap, tobacco, and soda water," as well as fire-bricks for the chief engineer. While engaged in this work,[18] the dredge *Ponrabbel* (on the way out from England to Tasmania) fell in her way; and towards evening she picked up a large British cargo boat, the *Ben Mohr* of Leith. These three vessels were sunk, the



[18] From this time forward we have the *Emden's* wireless log to guide us.

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crews being transferred to the *Buresk*.[19] On the 17th no captures were made. As the only ships that he had recently sighted were going *to* Colombo and no sign had appeared of any ship coming *from* Colombo, von Müller rightly conjectured that shipping was either being held up at that port to form a convoy or being sent by another route. He therefore decided to search first south of Minikoi and then north of it. South of Minikoi the only vessel sighted was the Spanish *Fernando Poo*,[20] but on the 18th north of Minikoi the *Emden* made another rich haul. While a discussion was going on as to the form of parole to be required of the prisoners[21]—for, in accordance with her usual custom, she intended to send all prisoners ashore in one of her prizes very soon—the British *Troilus* was sighted and caught. She had aboard 10,000 tons of general cargo, as well as 900 tons of spare coal; her unsuspecting captain expressed himself as furious with the British naval intelligence officer at Colombo who, he said, had told him that a course 30 miles north of Minikoi would be "dead safe." "This," writes von Witthoeft, "was naturally of the utmost interest to us." The *Emden* was now evidently upon the proper hunting ground This news was received at 7.15 p.m.; about 9 o'clock the cargo steamer *St. Egbert,* and at midnight the collier *Exford,* fell victims also, the list being completed with the *Chilkana,* another cargo vessel, at 9 a.m., on the 19th. The *Exford* had aboard 5,500 tons of Welsh coal, a very welcome gift to the *Emden*. The *St. Egbert,* though herself British, carried American-owned cargo, and was therefore chosen to take the prisoners into port. The rest were sunk.

Von Müller now dismissed the *St. Egbert* after telling her captain that for military reasons he must be prohibited from putting in to Colombo or Bombay, but that there was no

[19] From the *Den Mohr* the Germans are said to have learnt that British troops were being convoyed across the Indian Ocean; nine troopships escorted by a British cruiser and another, were said to have been seen near Socotra on the 12th (what had really been seen was five troopships escorted by the French *Dupleix* and the Russian *Askold*).

[20] As in the case of several other neutral vessels which he had sighted, von Müller did not board this ship but let her pass. His reason was that the blaze of lights aboard her, and other signs, made it fairly clear that her answer to his lamp signals—that she was a neutral—was correct; he therefore decided to avoid disclosing his identity or wasting time by boarding her.

[21] It was decided that giving parole precluded service during the war in auxiliary cruisers, but not in chartered cargo steamers.

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objection to his making for other harbours on the west coast of India, such as Cochin. The intention in issuing this instruction was to cause the British authorities to think that the *Emden's* next hunting-ground would be on the Bombay trade route, and, also, through the stories carried by the *St. Egbert,* to spread alarm and disaffection in other harbours than those already affected by the *Emden's* depredations. To further the ruse, the *Emden* turned south on parting from the *St. Egbert;* turned north again while she was sure that she was just within view; and, only when well out of sight, turned finally south. Von Müller followed a track well below the southern point of Ceylon,[22] and then ran east across the Bay of Bengal for Penang in Malacca Strait. He had his next two moves planned already, and south of Ceylon he detached his new collier (the *Exford*) to a rendezvous at the Cocos, with orders to wait there until the 15th of November.

His immediate object in this move was to catch and sink the *Montcalm* and *Dupleix,* which—through an incorrect report received from the Norwegian steamer *Dovre*—he expected to find at Penang. On the 25th he coaled off the Nicobar group, and left the *Buresk* with orders to meet him off Simalur;[23] then, hoisting the dummy fourth funnel to imitate a British cruiser, he ran down to Penang.

From sketch made by an officer in the *Emden.*

In harbour at Penang were two French destroyers; a third, the *Mousquet,* was taking her turn for guard duty outside. An old French torpedo gunboat, the *D'Iberville,* lay far up behind an island; near the mouth was the Russian light cruiser *Zemtchug,* just back from a scout in the eastern bay and preparing to overhaul her engines. The *Emden* ran in through the narrow mouth of the harbour about 5 a.m. on the 28th, just missing the *Mousquet,* and

[22] At this point he was nearer capture than ever before, or again until the Cocos fight. As he neared Colombo—he passed about 140 miles south-west of that port—the British cruiser *Hampshire* ran out of Colombo south-westwards to search the Maldives, and must have missed him by an hour or two only.

[23] The wireless log now fails us for a time; having no vessel in company, the *Emden* did not use her wireless from the afternoon of the 25th to that of the 30th, when she took the *Newburn.*

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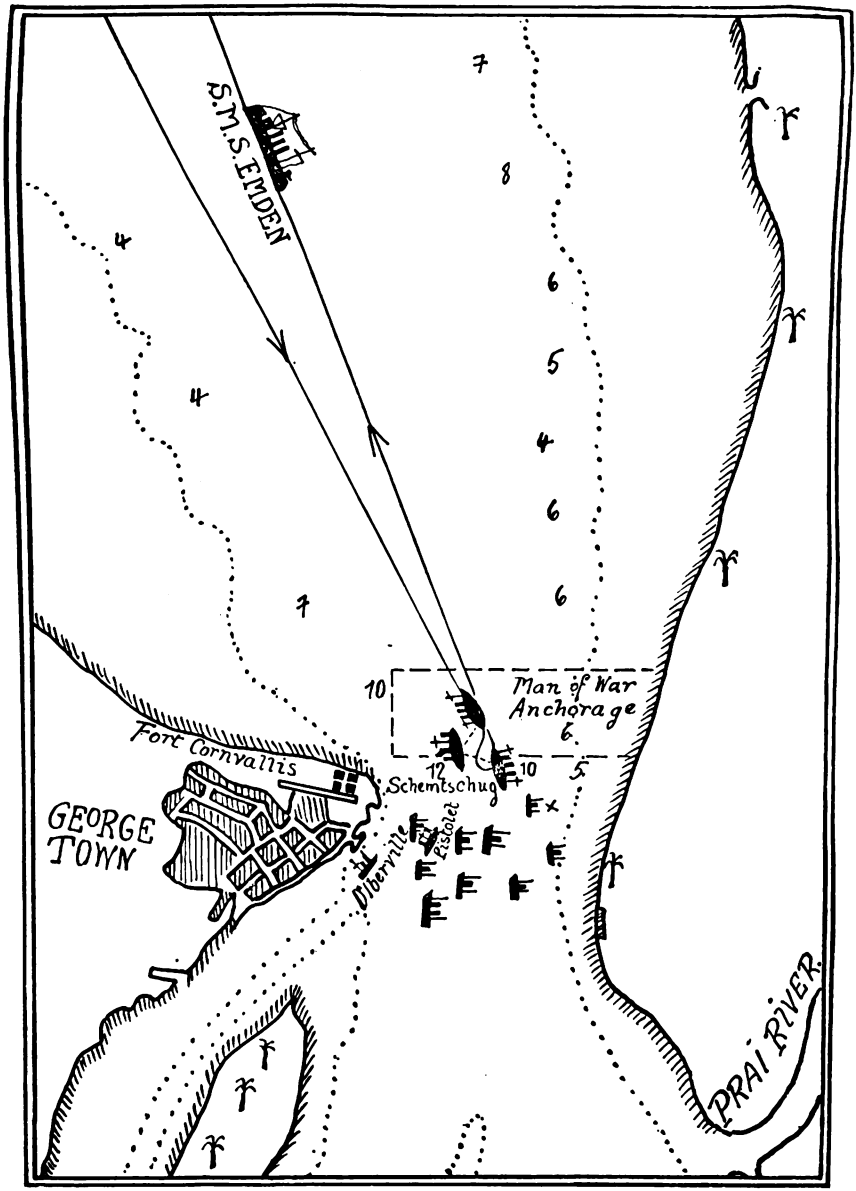
Map No. 12



THE *Emden's* RAID ON PENANG

Copy of a sketch by an officer in the *Emden.*

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discovered the *Zemtchug* at anchor (and asleep) among a number of trading vessels. As she passed, she fired a torpedo which hit the Russian's stern, and began a tornado of shells; turning and repassing, she fired another torpedo, which caught the *Zemtchug* amidships and sank her. Just as von Müller was about to leave the harbour the *D'Iberville* was sighted. He was turning to sink her with gunfire when he was warned that a destroyer was approaching in the harbour mouth and promptly ran out to meet her. The morning mirage, however, had been deceptive, and after one or two shots had been fired he found she was only a government steamer. A larger vessel being now sighted (and at first reported as a cruiser) he turned towards her and found she was the British steamer *Glenturret*. A prize crew was sent over, and the cutter carrying it had just returned when a warship was seen approaching. The *Glenturret* was therefore at once abandoned, and the *Emden* steered for the newcomer. It was the destroyer *Mousquet,* which came on undisturbed[24] and in five minutes was practically blown to pieces. While picking up the survivors, von Müller noted one of the other French destroyers coming out of harbour, and thought it safer to disappear. This he managed to do during a heavy rainstorm, though the destroyer held on to him for four hours.

He now made north-westwards to the Nicobars, crossing the Rangoon-Singapore trade route; and then turned sharply south to the Sabang-Colombo route. Here on the 30th of October he captured his last prize, the British steamer *Newburn,* with a cargo of salt. To this vessel he transferred the French prisoners, and sent her off to Sabang in Sumatra, proceeding himself south-east to pick up the *Buresk* near Simalur[25] and coal off North Pageh Island lower down on the Sumatran coast. Thence he ran on into the mouth of Sunda Strait, hoping to intercept more merchant vessels that his activities elsewhere might have driven to adopt this route. After two days' stay in that area without result he made for the Cocos group, where the *Exford* had been waiting for him (and for the *Markomannia*) since the 30th of October.

[24] The *Emden* now disclosed her nationality, hoisting her battleflags.

[25] He had originally intended to meet here the *Markomannia* also, but the survivors of the *Mousquet* let him know that that vessel and the *Pontoporos* had been captured. Von Mücke carelessly states that he did coal at Simalur.

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Von Müller's intention in visiting the Cocos is explained in the next chapter.[26] On the 8th of November at the appointed rendezvous north of the group he met the *Exford*. There was an exchange of officers and of provisions, the *Exford* contributing flour and salt meat in return for dripping, vinegar, cigarettes, cognac, tobacco, and chocolate; and just after half-past four in the afternoon von Müller signalled to the *Exford's* commander:

You are detached. In view of the fact that we have been intercepting wireless messages from an English warship, I recommend you to steer north-north-west till early to-morrow morning. Wish you pleasant voyage.

And there, with an odd message or two to the *Buresk* about following the *Emden* southwards at 6 knots, the wireless record ends—except for a single scribbled entry to which no date or hour is given:—

To Lieutenant G. Hurry up the job.

That message was in fact heliographed to the landing-party on Keeling Island, about 8.30 a.m. on the 9th. It was the *Emden's* last word as she saw the *Sydney* come up over the horizon in the north-east.

[26] *See p. 193.*

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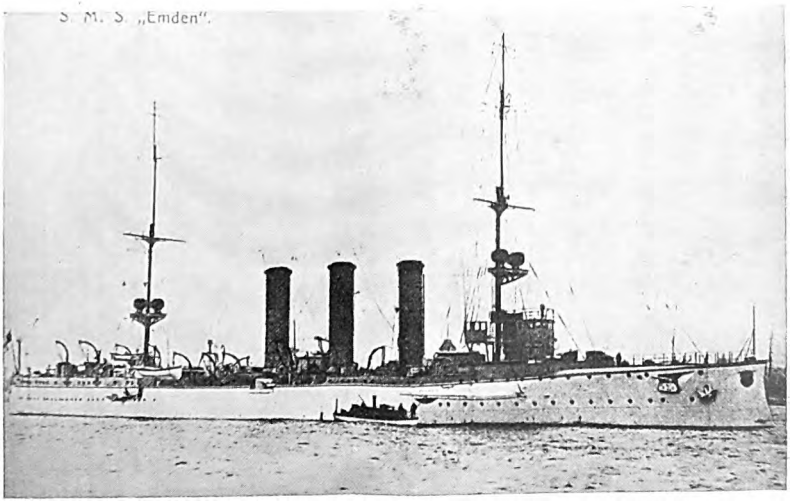
H.M.A.S. *Sydney*

Taken in 1913.



S.M.S. *Emden*

Lent by Leading Stoker H. R. Neher, R.A.N.
Aust. War Memorial Collection No. EN228.

To face p. 178.

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OFFICERS OF H.M.A.S. *Sydney*, DECEMBER 1914

Back row (*left to right*): Assistant-Paymaster E. Kingsford-Smith, Engineer-Lieutenant C. Dennis, Sub-Lieutenant J. M. C. Johnstone, Artificer-Engineer G. A. Hutchinson, Lieutenants B. O. Bell-Salter, F. L. Cavaye, R. C. Garsia, Surgeon A. C. R. Todd, Lieutenant D. E. Rahilly. *Centre row:* Surgeon L. Darby, Engineer-Lieutenant L. P. Fowler, Lieutenant-Commander J. F. Finlayson, Captain J. C. T. Glossop, Staff Paymaster E. C. Norton, Chaplain the Rev. V. A. Little, Lieutenant C. J. Pope. *Front row:* Boatswain A. M. Martin, Carpenter E. C. Behenna, Chief Gunner G. B. Salter, Torpedo Gunner J. C. MacFarlane.

Lent by Engineer-Lieut. C. Dennis, R.A.N.
Aust. War Memorial Collection No. EN163.

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CHAPTER VII

THE *SYDNEY-EMDEN* FIGHT AND ITS RESULTS

It was this alert and daring enemy which the Australian convoy and its powerful escort were approaching with the utmost precaution. Nor was the precaution excessive. In spite of the escort a surprise attack by the *Emden* at night would have done untold harm among the convoy. "We should have got in among the transports from astern," said one of her officers afterwards, "and slipped into the first division astern of the third and fourth ship; then we should have done all possible damage with our guns and torpedoes, and we should certainly have sunk half a dozen ships—probably twelve—before your escort could have come up and stopped us." It is not necessary to take this boast literally; but it is difficult to put limits to the ravaging that could be done at night among a number of defenceless transports by a single audacious cruiser, which could fire indiscriminately—since all other vessels would be enemies—while their escort must continually be considering the danger of sinking a transport by mistake.

But at last the *Emden's* luck had turned. She never dreamt the convoy was there.[1] She knew of its existence, but—perhaps a little over-valuing herself—imagined that it would make straight across the Indian Ocean in more southern latitudes, if by any chance it dared make for Aden at all. She had also presumably either forgotten the existence of the Australian mail service, or imagined that its vessels were similarly avoiding her beyond the chance of interception; for not long before she reached the Cocos group the Orient mail steamer *Osterley,* on her way to Colombo, had passed there unscathed.

The convoy, slowly acquiring the habit of discipline, was timed to pass the Cocos about dawn on the 9th of November, taking a course some fifty miles east of the group in order

[1] In consequence of the recklessness or thoughtlessness of certain Australian newspapers there was at one time considerable danger of the enemy discovering the convoy. Until a severe prohibition was laid upon them, some of the metropolitan papers tried to publish all details of the convoy, its constituent vessels and sailing dates; and at one moment it became necessary to hold up for more than a fortnight all newspapers posted to addresses outside the Commonwealth, lest dangerous disclosures should reach the Dutch Indies and be thence transmitted to the *Emden* or to other enemy ships.

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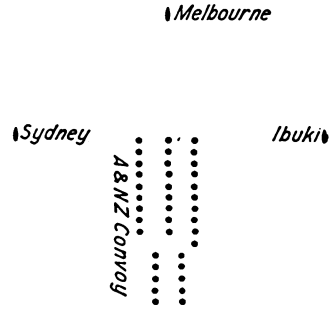
to avoid the recognised mail-steamer track. Before reaching that point, however, far-away events had deprived it of its most powerful escort. At Coronel the big German cruisers had destroyed the only British squadron that then lay between them and their South African colony, against which General Botha was leading an expedition. It was imperative that some protection should be given to this expedition, and early on the 8th the *Minotaur* was called away to hurry to the Cape, leaving the *Melbourne* in charge, and therefore in the lead. Consequently at the most critical point of the voyage the convoy had no warship guarding its rear. As night darkened, the lights of the transports were slowly — too slowly — extinguished; but a moon rising about midnight left their shapes vaguely visible to any observer who knew they were near. There was possibility of danger in the *Ibuki's* smoke cloud, but she was on the starboard flank, farthest away from the Cocos and the *Emden*.



A little before half-past six in the morning of the 9th the wireless operators in several transports, as well as in the escorting warships, were put on the alert by the interception of a message in an unknown code,[2] and of an immediate response from the Cocos wireless station, "What is that code?" About ten minutes later Cocos called up the *Minotaur*, which by then, however, was far on her way, and at a second call added "Strange warship approaching,"[3] which was a few minutes later repeated with the prefix S.O.S.; at the same time the telegraph operator cabled to Australia that a three-funnelled warship was off the island, and was landing a party in boats. At once the *Melbourne*, now in the *Minotaur's*

[2] This message—"Kativ Battav"—was the *Emden's* order to her collier the *Buresk* to join her at Port Refuge in the Cocos group. Von Müller, never dreaming an enemy ship was near, thought it a good chance of coaling in calm waters. Several operators in the convoy recognised the message as coming from the *Emden*. *See also Vol. I, pp. 103-6.*

[3] The *Minotaur* heard this call, and those which followed. Captain Kiddle at once turned back, but resumed his course on hearing that the *Emden* was ashore. The second call is given in some records as "Strange cruiser off entrance."

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place ahead of the convoy, increased her speed and turned sharply westwards towards the threatened island; then, as her captain remembered his responsibility for the safety of the convoy, he slackened speed again, swung back to station at the head of the convoy, and signalled to the *Sydney*, the warship nearest the island, to raise steam for full speed and run down to the Cocos. Captain Silver's action passed almost unnoticed for some months; but at a later date it was recognised as highly meritorious, and a high authority on British naval history (Vice-Admiral H. W. Richmond) has quoted it as worthy to take a place among the classical examples of devotion to duty.

By 7 a.m. the *Sydney* was away, doing twenty knots. At 9.15 she sighted the island and the enemy cruiser simultaneously; she could not tell whether the ship was the *Emden* or the *Königsberg* (both were supposed to be at large in the Indian Ocean at that time), but knew she had the speed of either, and slowed down to complete her preparations for the fight. About the same time von Müller sighted her; he had seen her smoke on the horizon for some time before, but thought it was that of the *Buresk*. When, however, the signaller reported a four-funnelled ship, he knew her for a British cruiser—but, believing the Australian ships to be many miles off to the south-west, took her for the *Newcastle* or a sister-ship, nearer his own size and age.[4] Consequently he determined to fight her, and, after warning the landing-party (for which he could not wait), steamed out to sea so as to have manœuvring room.

II

Much has been written in recent years about the altered conditions under which fighting at sea now proceeds. But it is even now very difficult for a landsman to picture those conditions clearly; the old sea-picture, with a couple of dozen ships huddled in the battle-smoke in an area of less than a

[4] *Sydney*, built 1912-13, 5,400 tons, eight 6-inch guns.
Newcastle, built 1909-10, 4,800 tons, two 6-inch and ten 4-inch guns.
Emden, built 1908-9, 3,600 tons, ten 4.1-inch guns.

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square mile, hold sway in our memories still. Moreover, even the modern battle between fleets, in which there is comparatively small scope for manœuvre, differed almost *in toto* from the single-ship action between fast cruisers, in which each has the utmost freedom of manœuvre and the movements of each are frequently obscured from the other by drifting smoke. It must also be clearly and persistently remembered that the fight now to be described began while the combatants were nearly six miles apart;[5] that during the actual fight they were never closer than three miles; and that even at the last, when the *Emden* was ashore and the *Sydney* stood in to compel her to lower her flag, they were separated by a good deal more than two miles. So we must picture the *Sydney,* just before the fight begins, as rushing along at her full twenty-five knots through a calm sea towards a just visible *Emden,* seven or eight miles off—Captain Glossop at the compass on the fore-bridge, his navigating lieutenant lying on top of the conning tower; his gunnery-lieutenant (Lieutenant Rahilly,[6] who was in control of the guns throughout the action) close by, ready to "spot" with his binoculars the fall of shot; the paymaster on deck, sitting on the ship's box of confidential papers and ready to throw them overboard if anything went wrong with the *Sydney;* every other officer and man at his fighting station—and then, as the two ships closed (a mile nearer every minute), the *Emden's* first salvo dropping out of the sky; for she was firing at extreme range, using the then exceptionally high elevation of thirty degrees which could be given to German guns.

That first salvo was excellently ranged along a rather extended line, but every shot fell within two hundred yards of the *Sydney.* The next was better still; and for ten minutes the *Sydney* moved through a hail of shell, though, just because of the narrow target she presented to shell arriving from so high an angle, only fifteen hits were actually made on her, and of those only five burst. It was during these early minutes that all her casualties occurred. Two shells from a

[5] Readers who were at the Front will know something about fighting at a 6-mile range. For others it may be of use to imagine an artillery duel between Williamstown and Brighton Beach in Port Phillip, or between Hunter's Hill and South Head in Port Jackson.

[6] Lieut.-Commr. D. E. Rahilly; R.N. Of Weston-super-Mare, Eng.; b. Clifton, Bristol, Eng., 1 Sept., 1887.

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closely-bunched salvo hit the after-control platform, and wounded all engaged there. Almost simultaneously a shell hit the range-finder on the fore-upper bridge, killing the operator and wrecking the instrument; if it had burst, it would probably have killed Captain Glossop and two more officers, but it passed harmlessly on through the screen and over the side. Other shells, bursting inboard, killed or wounded some of the crews of guns on the disengaged side, and set fire to some cordite charges lying near those guns; this fire was quickly and pluckily extinguished. A shell that pierced the forecastle deck and exploded in the boys' mess-deck caused some inconvenience, but no loss of life.

The *Sydney's* fire was not at first so effective. On the run across to Cocos, Glossop had decided in consultation with his gunnery officer to open fire at about 9,500 yards,[7] and to fight the main action at a slightly smaller range. The *Emden's* unexpected opening at 10,500 yards made it sound policy to get in some salvoes earlier than had been intended; but the first salvo went far over the *Emden*, the second fell short and wide, and the third produced two hits only—even these were not known at the moment. The German ship, on the other hand, knowing that her only chance of victory was to get in as many damaging hits as she could before she was herself battered, did her utmost in the way of rapid firing, and is said to have fired at this time a salvo every six seconds, thus having three in the air at once. As the *Sydney* turned slightly away in order to maintain the fight at her own range, the *Emden* found herself falling behind, and veered to starboard to get astern of her opponent, and thus obtain a chance of raking her before it was too late. As she did so, the *Sydney* made a corresponding turn to port and took full advantage of her superior speed and strength. Her shells[8] smashed the wireless installation, wrecked the steering-gear, shot away both range-finders and cut through the voice-pipes by which communication was maintained between the conning-tower and the guns. Soon the forward funnel went over the side; then the foremast, carrying with it the primary fire-control station and incidentally wrecking the fore-bridge;

[7] Glossop had swung round to bring his broadside to bear at that range, and had just ordered a trial salvo, when the *Emden's* first shells flew over him.
[8] Hundred-pound shells; the *Emden's* were 38-pounders.

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then a shell fell into the after-ammunition-room, which had to be flooded promptly to prevent a disastrous explosion. From this time onwards smoke repeatedly interfered with the opponents' clear vision of each other. The *Sydney's* fire for various reasons was a little ragged, both range-finders were out of action, and it was not possible to bring all the guns of a broadside to bear at once on the enemy; Rahilly therefore ordered independent firing, and confined himself to keeping the gunners supplied as nearly as possible with the correct range. The *Emden* had turned again on a course parallel to that of her enemy; but her shooting was, after the damage above recounted, so obviously ineffective that Glossop had no qualms about letting her close to half her original distance, and even slowed down and turned towards her. When about three miles apart (5,500 yards, as in position 7 on the plan), the *Sydney* discharged a torpedo,[9] immediately increasing speed, turning once more sharply to starboard, and thus bringing into action a battery which had up till then been out of action.

Even now von Müller did not abandon the fight, though possibly he already contemplated the ending which he effected later on. Conforming to the *Sydney's* movement, he also turned to starboard and struggled on, though not a shot of his had reached its mark since the first fifteen minutes. His second funnel had gone, his engine-room was afire, half his crew was disabled, and he had no reserves—they had been used for the landing party, and were still on Cocos Island; at last, says a member of the crew, "only the artillery officer and a few of the unskilled chaps were still firing." Then, just as his third funnel went by the board, von Müller found himself some three miles nearer land than his opponent (position 11 on the plan), and gave the order "To the island, with every ounce you can get out of the engines." The *Sydney,* possibly not understanding the manœuvre, conformed again to the new course, but made no attempt to intercept the *Emden* until (position 16) she was too close to her destination to be cut off. The map suggests that Glossop thought she was trying to run behind Keeling Island south-about, and intended himself

[9] The range was wrongly estimated as under 5,000 yards; and the torpedo, set for 5,000, ran that distance with excellent direction and then stopped.

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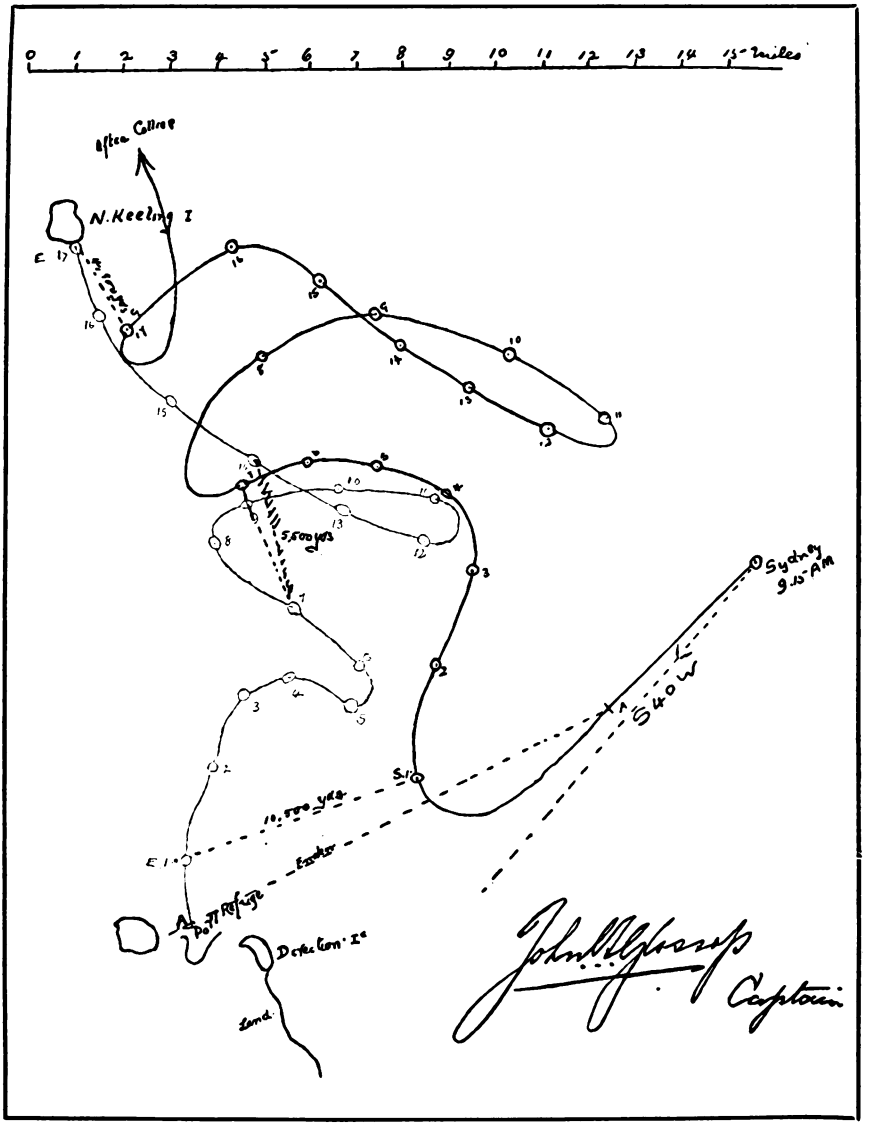

THE *Sydney-Emden* ACTION

Copy of a sketch made by Captain Glossop and Captain von Müller. (It will be observed that one of the two dotted lines, showing the bearing of the two ships from each other at position "7," has been partly erased, having been drawn in error.)

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to round that island north-about so as to catch her west of it. When, however, he saw her making straight for the reef, he swung in to less than a three-mile range, put in two more salvoes to make sure she could do no more harm, and then left her safe aground and went off to catch the *Buresk,* which had for some time been hovering on the outskirts of the action. Remembering that it was the *Sydney's* business to destroy her opponent as soon as possible by making every use of her superior speed and her heavier and longer-ranged guns, we may picture the fight as a series of four operations:—

A. The *Sydney,* caught unawares at an extreme range by the *Emden's* fire, joins action at once but turns north at high speed to recover her distance and her control of the action. During this time the *Emden* scores her only hits (positions 1-3). Time, 9.40 to 9.50 a.m.

B. The *Emden,* finding herself outdistanced and likely to lose all power of retaliation, tries unsuccessfully to cross astern of the *Sydney,* but is practically wrecked fore and aft by the latter's now absolutely dominant fire (positions 4-6). Time, 9.50 to 10.5 a.m.

C. Partly owing to considerable interference by smoke, the *Sydney* allows her opponent to close, and attempts to settle the contest with a torpedo; this being unsuccessful, she resumes the long-distance gunnery action and completes the enemy's ruin (positions 7-10). Time, 10.5 to 10.30 a.m.

D. The *Emden,* incapable of further resistance, takes advantage of the tactical situation to reach North Keeling Island, and runs ashore (positions 11-17). Time, 10.30 to 11.20 a.m.

Two points in this action require special note. In the first place, during recent years Captain Glossop has been widely criticised for causing unnecessary loss of life by running in within the *Emden's* range. It seems to have been unknown, not only to him, but also to the British naval authorities generally at that time, that German naval guns were so mounted as to be capable of fire at an elevation of thirty degrees, while ours could only attain eighteen degrees. This ignorance may have been blameworthy, and high naval

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authorities[10] have after the event severely criticised the Admiralty for it; but the blame does not attach to Glossop, who acted correctly on the information given to him by his superiors. It was not, however, the increased range of the *Emden* which exercised Glossop and Rahilly, but the range at which the *Sydney* could most effectively use her guns to sink her enemy in the shortest possible time. To have made the avoidance of loss of life the primary consideration in the *Sydney's* movements would have jeopardised the mission on which she had been despatched. Later in the war fire-control instruments were so vastly improved that effective fire could be maintained up to the extreme range of the guns; but in 1914 the crews had not been trained to fight their guns at extreme range in an action of this nature, and the consequent difficulty in loading, coupled with the comparative crudity of the 1914 fire-control equipment, would have made the results ineffective to the verge of puerility.

The second point concerns the behaviour of the *Sydney's* crew. Her officers, of course, and the majority of her crew were, at this early stage in the life of the Australian Navy, lent by the Admiralty from the Royal Navy. But quite a large proportion of the crew were Australians, described by Glossop as "young hands and men under training"; and their conduct in their first fight was beyond praise. Whether at the guns or in the stokeholds, every man was at his best. About 60 were from the Australian training ship *Tingira,* 30 being "boys," of whom T. Williamson[11] and Stevenson[12] were wounded. The only fault found with them was that, when it was thought wise to recall the gunners from independent firing to salvoes, the tense excitement of the fight made them slow to obey. Otherwise—to quote from a semi-official narrative confirmed, if not inspired, by Glossop himself:—

> They speedily settled down. The hail of shell which beat upon them was unceasing, but they paid as little heed to it as if they had passed their lives under heavy fire instead of experiencing it for the first time. . . .

[10] *e.g.*, Sir Percy Scott.

[11] Leading Seaman T. Williamson (No. 2329, R.A.N.). Of Sandringham, Vic.; b. Moonee Ponds, Vic., 12 July, 1897.

[12] Signalman T. V. Stevenson (No. 1871, R.A.N.). Of Goulburn, N.S.W.; b. Claremont, W. Aust., 16 June, 1897.

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The officers and men who are fighting a ship may receive more than their due in applause if one overlooks the sweating engineers, artificers, and stokers hidden far below. At no moment during the whole action did the engines fail to give Glossop the speed for which he asked. His success and his very slight losses sprang entirely from his speed, which, when required, exceeded the twenty-five knots for which his engines were designed.

Glossop's official report says:—

The engines worked magnificently, and higher results than trials were obtained.

"Our men," wrote another officer just after the fight, "behaved splendidly; this was especially noticeable in the case of the young boys, many of them only 16½ years old and just out of the training-ship."[13] Thereby hangs a story which Australian boys should never forget, and which shall also be told in words used by an officer while the fight was still fresh in the memory:—

When we were last in Sydney we took on board three boys from the training-ship *Tingira* who had volunteered. The captain said, "I don't really want them, but as they're keen I'll take them." Now the action was only a week or two afterwards, but the two out of the three who were directly under my notice were perfectly splendid. One little slip of a boy did not turn a hair, and worked splendidly. The other boy, a very sturdy youngster, carried projectiles from the hoist to his gun throughout the action without so much as thinking of cover. I do think for two boys absolutely new to their work they were splendid.

The boys here referred to were A. Colless[14] and J. Ryan,[15] both of whom were working in a zone of great danger. Another boy, Roy Millar,[16] was acting as "telescope number" at the upperbridge range-finder, when its pedestal was severed by a German shell which took off the operator's leg and threw Millar to the deck with the instrument on top of him. "He got up (writes an officer), shook himself, remarked 'Where's my bloody telescope?', which he proceeded to unscrew from the instrument, and looked out for torpedo tracks for the rest

[13] The vivid account from which this extract is made is given in *Appendix No. 17.*

[14] Able Seaman A. Colless (No. 2938, R.A.N.). Of Northbridge, N.S.W.; b. Sydney, 19 Oct., 1897.

[15] Leading Telegraphist J. W. Ryan (No. 3293, R.A.N.). Of Ballarat, Vic.; b. Ballarat, 2 Oct., 1898.

[16] Able Seaman R. M. Millar (No. 2323, R.A.N.). Of Elsternwick, Vic.; b. Perth, W. Aust., 14 June, 1898.

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of the action."[17] The cases here instanced are merely some of those that happened to come within the observation of one or two of the officers, but the steadiness and gallantry of the boys as a whole was an outstanding feature of the action, and drew comment from many quarters.

III

So far as concerns the action which ended that morning, when the *Emden* was driven ashore on a Cocos reef, it would be difficult to wish it different. The *Emden* had taken the chance of war, had fought gallantly against a superior opponent, and had been fairly as well as inevitably beaten. "We should have done better," said von Müller next day, but it is not easy to see how. The *Sydney,* after her initial mistake (for which, as has been already explained, Glossop was not to blame), took charge of the action, and used her superior powers well and to the full. But in the next twenty-four hours a good deal happened that one could have wished otherwise; though it was the evil complexity of the situation, and the mutual and inevitable ignorance of the combatants, not any blameworthy behaviour of any British officer, that led to the regrettable incidents.

When Glossop saw that his opponent was fast aground and incapable of movement, he left her in order to chase the *Buresk,* which during the action had hovered in the vicinity northwards. Overtaking this vessel shortly after noon, he fired a gun across her bows to stop her, and sent an armed boat aboard. Her German crew, however, had opened and damaged the Kingston valves to prevent her capture, and she was already fast sinking; to make sure of her, after taking off both the original and the German crew, Glossop fired four shots into her and watched her sink, then returning to the *Emden.* He reached North Keeling Island about 4 p.m., and found that her flag was still flying. "Will you surrender?" he signalled in the international code. The reply was in Morse: "What signal? No signal books"; and in Morse, accordingly, Glossop repeated "Do you surrender?" and a little later, as no answer was made, "Have you received my

[17] The account adds: "A. Mellor" (of Paddington, Q'land), "a signal boy on the bridge was steady and more than that." A. R. Whitby (of Darlington, N.S.W.), below decks on ammunition-supply, and Tom Williamson, who was severely wounded in the after-control position, drew favourable comment from the same officer.

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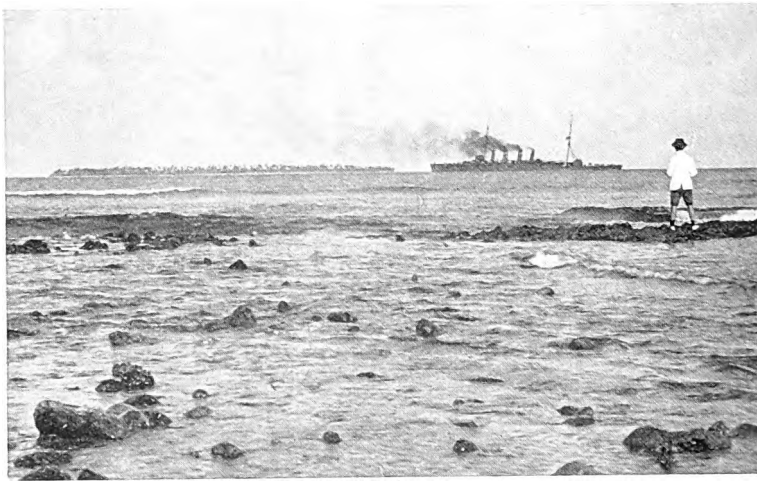
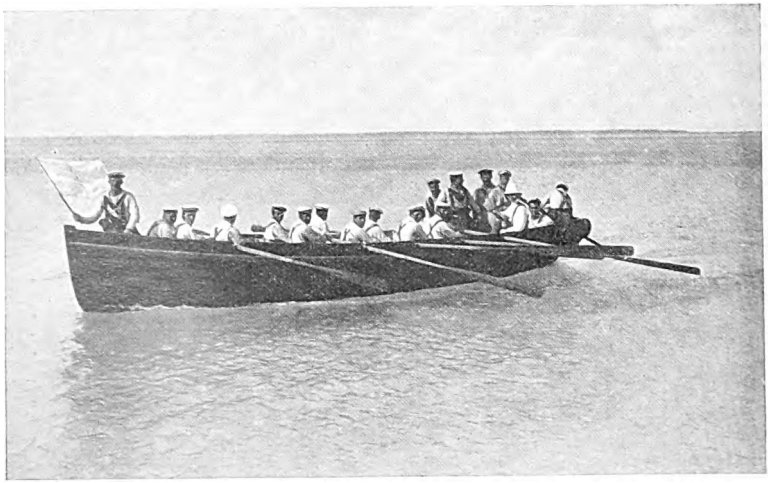


THE ARRIVAL OF THE *Sydney* OFF DIRECTION ISLAND ON THE 10TH OF NOVEMBER, 1914

Lent by R. Cardwell, Esq., and "The Zodiac."



A BOAT FROM THE *Sydney* COMING ASHORE AT DIRECTION ISLAND UNDER THE WHITE FLAG, 10 NOVEMBER 1914

Lent by R. Cardwell, Esq., and "The Zodiac."

To face p. 189.

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signal?" Von Müller remained silent, and the German officers who had been captured in the *Buresk* assured Glossop that their captain would never surrender. As long as the German flag flew, the *Emden* was a still resisting enemy; moreover, though her guns were all destroyed or dismantled, she had used no torpedoes, and, so far as Glossop knew, might still be able to discharge one, or to resist with rifle-fire any boat he should send to board her. His duty was unmistakable; if von Müller chose to evade surrender, he must endure the further use of force to compel him. Accordingly, the *Sydney* ran in to about a two-mile range, trained her guns on the mainmast (on which the flag was flying) and put in two salvoes. Almost immediately a figure was seen clambering up the mast; the *Sydney's* fire ceased, the German flag came down, and a white sheet was displayed from the *Emden's* quarter-deck. The delay had cost the lives of more than twenty men.

In the course of war, incidents like this must happen. Indeed, only a few days earlier off Coronel the *Nürnberg* had fired on the defenceless *Monmouth* in exactly similar circumstances,[18] and no British officer or writer has ever complained of the act. But the Germans—even von Müller, as will be seen in his narrative quoted in the next section—have on several occasions complained of Glossop's conduct, and it has therefore been necessary to deal with the matter in some detail.

As soon as the *Emden* had surrendered, the *Sydney* went back to pick up two boats from the *Buresk* which had been left behind to rescue drowning sailors. But the situation was not even then safely in hand. Glossop knew nothing of

[18] It may be as well to quote the account of this incident given by the British Official Historian:—

"As the *Nürnberg* approached her the list increased so much that she could not use her port guns, and the Germans could open fire on her with impunity at close range. 'To me,' wrote Admiral von Spee's son, who was a sub-lieutenant on board, 'it was dreadful to have to fire on the poor devil no longer able to defend herself; but her flag was still flying.' The *Nürnberg*, in fact, ceased firing for several minutes to let her surrender, but in the *Monmouth* there was no such thought. From the earliest Tudor days British ships had established a reputation that they would always sink rather than surrender. In later times the tradition had not always been maintained, but in the present war there was in this respect, as in so many others, a reversion to the old indomitable spirit—not only, it must be said, in our own Service, but in that of the enemy as well. Had the *Monmouth* chosen to surrender, she could easily have done so. As it was, there was no choice for the *Nürnberg* but to give her the only end she would accept. It came quickly. The *Nürnberg* had to make but one more run, pouring in a lacerating fire at point-blank range, and then the defiant British cruiser capsized. To the last her flags were flying, and still flew as she went down."

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what might have happened on Direction Island, except that Germans had landed there and taken possession of the cable station; further, he was not at all sure that the *Emden* was alone; the whereabouts of the *Königsberg* had not yet been disclosed, and quite possibly the two enemy cruisers were hunting in company—in which case the convoy, though long since past the Cocos area, was not yet out of danger. He could not, therefore, devote himself to succouring his defeated enemy. He sent to the *Emden* one of the *Buresk's* boats, manned by the German prize crew he had taken from her, with a message that he would come back next morning; then, finding it too late to make a landing on Direction Island—from which, he was told, Telefunken (*i.e.,* German) wireless signals were being heard—he lay on and off all night, ready to answer any call for help if the *Königsberg* came on the scene, and in the early morning proceeded to the cable station, to find that the Germans had escaped the evening before in a small schooner belonging to the owner of the island.

It was now possible to attend seriously to the needs of the *Emden.* Glossop borrowed from the cable staff a doctor (H. S. Ollerhead) and two assistants, and steamed back to North Keeling, where the long delay had brought about horrible conditions. Men were lying killed and mutilated in heaps. The ship was riddled with gaping holes, and gutted with fire; it was with difficulty one could walk about the decks. Practically nothing had been done for the wounded sailors, except that some of them had themselves checked the flow of blood from limb-wounds with improvised tourniquets of cloth or spun yarn. The *Emden* had two surgeons on her complement; but the assistant surgeon had been blown overboard during the action, reached North Keeling, lay exhausted all night in agonies of thirst, and in the morning drank salt water and died raving. The chief surgeon, Dr. Luther, therefore found himself alone for nearly twenty-four hours in a battered ship with hundreds of badly wounded men, whom he had to attend without any assistance, and with a very scanty supply of dressings and appliances. It is hardly to be wondered at that, when the *Sydney* arrived, he was for a short time a nervous wreck.

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The transference of seventy or eighty wounded men from the *Emden* to the *Sydney* took about five hours. "The transhipping," wrote the *Sydney's* surgeon in his official report, "was an exceedingly difficult and painful undertaking, as there was a large surf running on the beach where the *Emden* went ashore, and she was so much of a shambles that the shifting, collecting, and lowering of the wounded into the boats was necessarily rough. . . . Besides the seventy wounded received that day, there were over 110 prisoners, and twenty Chinamen from the sunken collier; so the crowding can be imagined, seeing that we were a crowded ship before." It is pleasant to record, on the authority of a captured officer, that the transference was "carried out very cleverly and carefully." And it must be further recorded that, except for two operations performed while the *Sydney* was on her way from Direction Island to North Keeling, the worst cases from the *Emden* were given precedence over the *Sydney's* own. The strain on the surgeons may be gauged by the fact that operations had to be performed continuously from 6 p.m. on Tuesday up to 4.30 a.m. on Wednesday; then a certain number of less severe cases were attended to; operations began again after breakfast, and took up most of the day; and "at midnight we went to bed after a spell of over forty hours without sleep." The two medical officers of the *Sydney*—Darby[19] and Todd[20]—bore the brunt of this work, Dr. Ollerhead giving excellent assistance until the ship left the Cocos about midday on Wednesday; Dr. Luther was incapacitated for many hours, but took his part as anæsthetist when Dr. Ollerhead left.

On the Thursday there arrived an auxiliary cruiser, the *Empress of Russia,* under orders to relieve the *Sydney* of all prisoners who could be moved; and from that time onwards conditions aboard were more comfortable, though it was not till after leaving Colombo, a week later, that conditions again approached the normal. When the *Sydney* was again for a time reunited with the transports of the Australian and New

[19] Surgeon-Capt. L. Darby; R.A.N.; b. George Town, Tas., 3 Jan., 1889.

[20] Surgeon-Lieut. A. C. R. Todd; R.A.N. Of Tamworth, N.S.W.; b. Leichhardt, N.S.W., 23 June, 1890.

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Zealand convoy in Colombo harbour, the natural desire of the troops to demonstrate their admiration was suppressed, Captain Glossop having signalled a request from the *Sydney's* officers and men that—in order to avoid adding to the mortification of the wounded survivors lying on her decks—there should be no cheering.

Two reasons have made it necessary to dwell on the painful *sequelæ* of a very gallant action. In the first place, they are unusual in naval engagements. When a ship sinks. she carries her wounded for the most part with her, and the best the victor can do is to pick up as many of the unwounded as he can, a proceeding which does not entail exceptional strain on the medical staff. But the *Emden* ran ashore, and thus added all her casualties to those of the *Sydney* (fortunately few); and the long but unavoidable delay in attending to them—twenty-four hours' exposure under tropical conditions without alleviation—greatly increased both the suffering of her wounded and the difficulty of dealing with their injuries when help arrived. In the second place, charges made from both sides in the press of the United States—German statements that their wounded were abandoned or maltreated, alleged British counter-charges that the German surgeons were incompetent and neglectful—make it advisable to state clearly what did happen. If the *Sydney* had had no enemy but the *Emden* to deal with, she could have rendered expeditious and full assistance before the day of the fight was over; but she had the *Buresk* to chase, Direction Island to relieve, and the *Königsberg* to guard against. On the other hand, the German surgeons—one of them isolated and nearly mad with thirst on North Keeling, the other as isolated and without resources in a wrecked and battered ship, and both humiliated by defeat —endured a strain beyond the limits of ordinary endurance, and must not be judged by normal standards.

It was, in fine, not without reason that an official minute of the report of the *Sydney's* chief medical officer singled out for special praise:—

> (i) The resourcefulness of the young surgeons in making the very utmost use of their very limited space and accommodation for the demands of an overwhelming influx of

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cases of terrible injuries . . . . and their astonishing endurance through such an ordeal of continuous exertion and anxiety;

(ii) the adaptability of the sailors, whose naval training and intelligence enabled them to render valuable aid to the medical staff;

(iii) the humane consideration shown to the German wounded, who received equal attention and care with our own wounded.

And it is perhaps worth while adding that the operations carried out under those exceptional conditions were so expertly done that in nearly all cases nothing remained for the land hospitals but to continue the regular dressings and attention.

IV

The German official account of the *Sydney-Emden* fight (taken from Captain von Müller's report to the German Admiralty) is as follows:[21]

My raid on the Cocos group was determined by the following considerations:—

Apart from the material damage the enemy would have suffered by the destruction of the cable and wireless stations and the temporary interruption of telegraphic communications between Australia on the one hand and England and other countries on the other, I hoped also to effect (1) a general unrest among shipping to and from Australia by creating the impression that the *Emden* would proceed to harry the steamer traffic south and west of Australia, and (2) a withdrawal from the Indian Ocean of at least some of the English cruisers which were taking part in the hunting down of the *Emden*. My intention was, after carrying out the raid on the Cocos group, to make for Socotra and cruise in the Gulf of Aden, and then on the steamer-route between Aden and Bombay. . . .

On 7 November, about 8 p.m., the *Emden* arrived at its appointed rendezvous with the *Exford* . . . 30 miles north of the North Keeling Island. The *Exford* . . . was then to proceed to a rendezvous about 900 miles[22] away in the direction of Socotra, await the *Emden* there as long as her provisions lasted, and then, if we did not turn up, run for a neutral harbour.[23] The *Markomannia* and any other colliers which might possibly be ordered from Simalur to the rendezvous 30 miles north of North Keeling I intended to send to a Dutch Indian port (Amboina). . . . On the way thither the *Markomannia* was to make for the Nusa-Bessi Strait at the eastern end of Timor in order to send to some Dutch harbour a steamer that had been given rendezvous there. . . .

[21] From the German official naval history, *Der Krieg zur See*, 1914-1918—*Der Kreuzerkrieg in den ausländischen Gewässern*, *Vol. II, pp. 62-82.*

[22] The German narrative has "sea-miles"; for simplicity this is translated as "miles" throughout this account.

[23] The *Exford* reached the rendezvous at 8 a.m. on the 8th, coaled the *Emden*, was sent off to her new rendezvous, waited there till the end of the month, and then made for Padang in Sumatra. Outside Padang—von Müller says she was within the three-mile limit—she was captured by the British auxiliary cruiser *Himalaya*.

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From about 6 p.m. on the 7th the Cocos wireless station (which had not previously been intercepted) began to send out every hour a wireless message in three-figure cypher preceded by the word "urgent." No answer followed at first, and I thought it probable that this was a secret communication to passing traders. At daybreak (on the 8th) this message was taken in by an English warship using the signal letters "NC" (as we supposed the light cruiser *Newcastle*, but almost certainly the armoured cruiser *Minotaur*), and further interchange of messages between the warship and the land-station was intercepted by us. The (decreasing) strength of the warship's signals showed us that her distance from the Cocos was increasing; and about noon on the 8th, when this wireless conversation, after being resumed again, finally ceased, we estimated that she was about 200 miles from the *Emden*. I thought it probable that this was a warship on her way from Sunda Strait to the Cape Colony, where the rebellion under de Wet had just broken out. As we did not intercept any wireless messages between her and another warship, it seemed likely that no other was in the vicinity.

I had intended to attack the Cocos group on the 8th, but postponed the operation for a day because of the unusual hourly messages picked up during the night of 7-8 November and because I had not yet met the *Exford*. When on the morning of the 8th I picked up the warship's conversation with the shore station, I debated whether I should not delay for another day. I gave up this idea, however, as I reckoned that next morning the English warship would be quite far enough away; further I had to consider the state of my coal-supply, since my nearest safe coaling-station on the way to Socotra was at Addu atoll in the southern Maldives, about 1,500 miles off. . . .

I had to reckon with the presence—not very probable, but still possible—of an enemy cruiser stationed in the group to protect the cable and wireless stations; as I did not wish to expose my collier to the risk of destruction, or even of damage by shell-fire, I ordered the *Buresk* to wait 30 miles north of the South Keeling group, and not to rejoin me unless she received wireless orders to do so. If the situation proved favourable, I intended to use the opportunity for coaling. . . . A little after 6 a.m., shortly after sunrise, the *Emden* anchored in Port Refuge. No enemy ship was stationed near the group, nor, when it grew light, was a vessel to be seen anywhere on the horizon. . . . As soon as the anchor was dropped, the landing party went ashore in the pinnace and the two cutters. . . . Lieutenant-Commander von Mücke had my orders to destroy the cable and wireless stations and if possible to cut the cables—first the Australian, next the South African, then that to the Dutch Indies. All code-books and records of messages were to be brought aboard. A recall signal was agreed on. Verbally I told Lieutenant-Commander von Mücke that, if the island was in a state of defence and garrisoned, I would give up the plan of landing and confine myself to bombarding the wireless and telegraphic stations, as a loss of personnel in this enterprise was to be avoided at all costs—this in view of the raiding campaign later on. The *Emden's* wireless had received orders to drown at once any wireless signals from the island.

As conditions in Port Refuge were favourable for coaling, and no enemy warship seemed to be in the immediate vicinity, I had a wireless message sent to the *Buresk* as soon as the boats neared the landing-stage, ordering her to join the *Emden* forthwith. The *Buresk* did not answer, as her transmitter was out of order For this eventuality the

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arrangement had been made that the wireless signal to rejoin should be repeated three times. . . . The island station then asked, "What code? What ship is that?" We naturally did not answer. Soon afterwards the island station began to talk, and, in spite of our interruptions, the message "Strange ship off entrance" got through. A little while later a warship or auxiliary cruiser whose signal letters had not been heard previously in the war was heard to call up the island, but received no answer, as the station had in the meanwhile been destroyed by our landing party.

By resistance-measurements the distance of the enemy ship was estimated at 200 to 250 miles. I now abandoned my intention of coaling and cancelled the arrangements made for it. . . .

Towards 9 a.m. smoke was sighted to the northwards, and was presumed to be that of the *Buresk*. Soon we began to doubt . . . whether it could be the *Buresk*, as she was usually almost smokeless; but it was considered that the unusually dense smoke-cloud might be attributed to her having had a fire in her bunkers the day before, which was probably causing her to use the partly burnt coal; moreover she would certainly be running at top speed. . . . From the crow's nest, too, it was at first incorrectly reported that the ship in sight had one funnel and two masts. At 9.15 the landing party showed no sign of returning, so I signalled to them: "*Arbeiten beschleunigen*" ("Speed up the work in hand"). Soon afterwards the masts of the oncoming vessel . . . were recognised as those of a warship on account of their height. Probably through an error in reckoning, she was not at first making direct for Port Refuge, but seemed to by trying to pass the group on the east side.

What followed now happened extraordinarily quickly, as the enemy warship was coming on at high speed—20 to 25 knots. I ordered steam up in all the boilers and repeated several times the recall for the landing party: then I gave the orders "Up anchor," "Clear ship for action," "Get up steam immediately to put on all possible speed." By this time it was seen that the enemy ship had four funnels, and we guessed it was the English cruiser *Newcastle;* only in the afternoon did we discover that she was the Australian cruiser *Sydney*, a ship of a very similar type. . . .

About 9.30 a.m. the landing party began to re-embark, but, with the enemy quickly approaching, it was seen to be impossible to get them on board before the fight began. As soon, therefore, as the anchor was weighed, I ordered full steam ahead and set the ship on a N.N.W. course so as to improve still further our favourable position with regard to the wind until the actual beginning of the fight. My object was to attempt to inflict on the enemy such damage by gun-fire that her speed would be seriously lessened, and I might be able to bring on a torpedo action with some chance of success. . . .

When the *Emden* after weighing anchor started on her N.N.W. course, the *Sydney*, which up to that time had been steering south, came straight for the *Emden*, but, when about 13,000 yards distant and bearing about four points on the bow, swung round to a converging course. When the range-finder showed 9,800 yards I ordered fire to be opened. The first salvo, sighted for 10,300 yards, went far to the left and beyond the mark, the second went over but in the right direction;[24] then one or two more salvoes fell short, and those which

[24] Captain von Müller's account is founded partly upon reports from the *Buresk*, which observed his salvoes and tried to signal to him the results. But see *p. 182* for the *Sydney's* report of these salvoes.

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followed fell on the mark. According to observation from the *Buresk*, which had meanwhile come up, the spread of our salvoes in the first phase of the action was slight, and the guns were laid well on the mark. A short time after the beginning of the fight a strong flare-up was noticed on the *Sydney's* main deck, probably the result of a lucky hit on some cordite which it set on fire.

The *Sydney* opened fire immediately after the *Emden*, having shortly before set her course parallel. At first she shot far over the *Emden*, and it was quite a long time before she got our range. I have since learnt the reason. With the second salvo of the *Emden* two very lucky hits were scored; one shell, which unfortunately did not explode, hit the forward range-finder station (in whose neighbourhood the captain and navigating officer were standing), destroyed the range-finder, and killed the operator. A second shell burst in the after-control station and wounded all its crew, an officer amongst them.

A few minutes after opening fire I ordered the course to be altered two points to starboard in order to obtain a more suitable range for our 10.5-centimetre guns, and to make it more difficult for the *Sydney* to keep on her mark. As soon as the *Sydney* got our range a good deal of damage was done to the *Emden*, and this increased so quickly that I very soon got the impression that the *Sydney* had gained fire superiority over us. That the *Sydney's* guns after but a brief interval overwhelmed the *Emden's* although we scored the first lucky hits, and in the first phase of the fight had kept on our mark while displaying much greater speed in firing, may be attributed to the following causes:—

(1) The explosive effect of the English 15-centimetre shell is considerably greater than that of the 10.5-cm. shell.

(2) The *Sydney* had better protection for her hull and her guns (side-armour and bigger and stronger gun-shields); on the *Emden* two guns of her broadside were without gun-shields.

(3) The ammunition-forwarding gear in the *Emden* was very vulnerable; in particular it could be easily rendered useless by damage to the hoists from shell-splinters.

(4) The range at which the fight had to be carried on, especially at the beginning, marks the outer limit for any effective use of the 10.5-cm. gun; the possibility of scoring accurate hits with the 15-cm. gun is at long and medium ranges better than those of the 10.5.

(5) As the *Sydney* was 2,000 tons heavier, she rode the swell more steadily than the *Emden*, a factor which also affected the possibility of accurate fire.

Soon after the *Sydney* got our range, a shell destroyed our wireless room. Shortly afterwards a shell exploding on the forecastle, just in front of the conning-tower, put out of action the greater part of the crew of No. 1 gun and some of the men who happened to be in the lee of the conning-tower. Then the electric command transmission to the guns went wrong, so that all orders for them had afterwards to be transmitted by speaking-tube; with the noise of the combat this method proved to be very difficult, and adversely affected the rate of fire and probably also the spread of the salvoes. The steering-gear in the conning-tower went wrong at the same time as the helm-telegraph. Steering had then to be done from Section 1, orders being given to that

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section by speaking-tube. News came back to the conning-tower that the forward funnel had fallen over to port; and from another part (probably the poop) came the report that the guns there were not getting enough ammunition.

In order to get closer to the enemy and to obstruct his range-keeping, I gave orders about fifteen minutes after the beginning of the fight to alter the course again two points to starboard, but changed this order before it was carried out to "one point to starboard," for the *Sydney*, owing to her superior speed, was already too far ahead of us, so that if I had made the greater turn my after-guns would have been prevented from bearing. By splinters of a shell which exploded near the conning-tower, the gunnery officer, Lieutenant-Commander Gaede, was wounded near the eye; the torpedo officer (who was also acting as manœuvring officer[25]), Lieutenant Witthoeft, was hit on the chin; and Ordinary Seaman Tietz, who was attending to the engine-room telegraph, and Ordnance Artificer Hartmann, who was transmitting orders to the guns, were slightly wounded. The last two had to leave the conning-tower.

About twenty minutes after the beginning of the fight news came through from Section I that the steering-gear had gone wrong. What caused this failure of the steering-gear I have never been able to ascertain. I ordered the hand-gear to be manned; accordingly the navigating officer, Lieutenant-Commander Gropius, and the battle steersman, Able Seaman Büsing, went aft to help the personnel of the after signal-station to get the hand-gear going. As nearly all the latter had been killed already, the personnel of the forward signal-station—or those whose members of it had not been already put out of action—also went aft on to the poop; the hand-gear, however, could not be moved at all, evidently because its shafting had been jammed by a direct hit. Apparently the ammunition brought up for No. 4 gun had been blown up a little earlier by an enemy shell; besides other damage, this started a strong fire under the poop which made it impossible for the navigating officer and the personnel of the signal-station to get back to Section I. Lieutenant-Commander Gropius informed me that the hand-gear was unworkable, and then went aft again and helped to man No. 5 gun. By the blast from a shell which exploded on or under the poop, he and several of the crew were afterwards blown overboard.

Meanwhile the ship, because of the failure of the steering-gear, had swung round about eight points to starboard; any farther swing was checked by means of the screws. As the fire of our starboard guns had already weakened considerably, I did not alter her course again, but let the port battery come into action. From that time on the ship was steered with the screws.

During this phase of the fight the range-finders failed. The fire of the port battery soon weakened also, probably because of the lack of ammunition and the serious casualties among the gun-crews and ammunition-carriers. The officer-in-charge of the range-finders, Sub-Lieutenant Zimmerman, and Gunnery Mate von Risse, who had been engaged in transmitting orders, were sent aft to help the guns, as they were of no further use in the conning-tower. Both of these were killed later in the course of the fight. From the torpedo-room came the report that the torpedo-air-compressor was now out of action.

[25] Apparently performing the duties of officer of the watch.

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By this time the prospect of getting within torpedo range of the enemy had become extremely small; still I did not wish to give up the attempt to attack with torpedoes, especially as the gun-fight was going more and more against the *Emden;* I therefore put the ship to port against our opponent. When the distance had been decreased to about 4,900 yards, the *Sydney,* after making an unsuccessful attempt to torpedo us (I heard this afterwards), swung sharply to starboard and stood away at high speed from the *Emden.* Meanwhile the fire of our guns had slackened still more. The gunnery officer, Lieutenant-Commander Gaede, who up till now had quietly controlled the gun-fire under circumstances which were continually growing more difficult, now asked my permission to go down to the guns in order to put things right there, and proposed that I should continue to pass down the ranges to him. I agreed to do so. Lieutenant-Commander Gaede then concentrated those men of the gun-crews who were still in action on two guns, and soon afterwards on one only. While engaged on this duty he was severely wounded, and died shortly after the end of the action. The transmission of orders to the guns was now working very badly, the speaking tubes being much damaged; the upper bridge had been shot away, the centre and after funnels knocked over, and the foremast went overside, carrying with it the Adjutant Sub-Lieutenant von Guerard, who had been stationed in the crow's nest as auxiliary observer for the guns, and Signalman Metzing.

After the *Sydney* had fired its torpedo and turned away, I wanted to make a second attempt to get within torpedo range of the enemy. I was not, however, able at first to send through the exchange to the starboard engine the order "Stop the starboard screw." I therefore sent the message orderly, Ordinary Seaman Werner, twice along the deck to the engine-room skylight to call down the necessary orders. After some time, however, it again became possible, although with some delay, to send orders to the starboard engine by way of the exchange and the port engine. My order was "Everything you can get out of the engines"; but even at this second attempt my opponent would not let me get nearer than 5,500 or 6,000 yards. Our engines could now only attain a rate of 115 to 120 revolutions, which means a speed of 19½ knots, probably because the funnels had been shot away, and the furnace doors had, in consequence, to be left open to avoid danger from gas and smoke; further, one or two boilers had ceased functioning during the action.[26]

In the meantime our gun-fire had completely collapsed, so I swung away from the *Sydney* by stopping the starboard engine. Shortly afterwards I was informed from the torpedo-room that it must be abandoned on account of a leak from a shot under water. Before this a smaller leak, also caused by a shot under water, had been plugged by the torpedo personnel, led by the second torpedo-officer, Prince Franz Josef von Hohenzollern. As it was now impossible for me to damage my opponent in any way further, I decided to put my ship, which was badly damaged by gun-fire and burning in many places, on the reef in the surf on the weather-side of North Keeling Island and to wreck it thoroughly, in order not to sacrifice needlessly the lives of the survivors.

[26] From other accounts it is evident that great trouble was caused in the engine-rooms by the failure of ventilation through the falling of the funnels, the stoppage of the fans, and the blowing in of the skylights. The steam and poisonous fumes more than once forced some of the staff to abandon their engine-room.

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Shortly before grounding, which happened about 11.15 a.m., I had both engines stopped; immediately after the impact I ordered "Full speed ahead" again so as to jam the ship on the reef as thoroughly as possible. Then I ordered fires to be drawn in all boilers, and all the engine and boiler rooms to be flooded; also, as the *Sydney* at first continued firing, I gave permission to everyone on deck, or who came on deck, to drop overboard and swim to the island.

When the *Emden* gave up her second attempt to get within torpedo-range of the *Sydney* as impossible, the *Sydney* had also turned to star-board and followed us in a running fight towards the north-west. The commander of the *Sydney* (as I heard from him later) wanted to prevent our running ashore. The *Sydney* swung to port, described a complete circle, ceased firing at 11.20 a.m., several minutes after the *Emden* had run ashore, and then went off in pursuit of the collier *Buresk*. (Here follows an account of the losses aboard the *Sydney*.)

During the night preceding the 9th of November the *Buresk* had been carried by a current about twelve miles to the north-west of her proper course. After she had received the order to rejoin the *Emden*, she came south at her utmost speed. At 8.30 a.m., when she was still about five miles north of North Keeling Island, she sighted a heavy cloud of smoke eastwards, which at first she thought came from a merchant vessel; later on it was seen to be a warship, which was steering, however, not for South Keeling Island, but leaving this on the west. About 9.30 a.m. the *Buresk* was about five miles south-east of North Keeling Island, when she sighted the *Emden* with flags flying at her topmast, and observed that the ship previously seen was making for the *Emden*. The *Buresk* then proceeded slowly, and after a time turned northwards to await the result of the action; when she realised later on that it would probably turn out badly for the *Emden*, she tried to get away north-westwards. About 11.50 a.m. she noticed that the *Sydney* was chasing her; it seemed impossible to get away, and Lieutenant-Commander of the Reserve Klöpper had the ship cleared to sink her. About 1 p.m. the *Sydney* signalled her to stop, whereupon she stopped, all the Kingston valves in the engine-room were opened, the small arms were thrown overboard, the secret papers burnt, and the wireless station destroyed. Meanwhile two boats were cleared and provisioned for the reception of the Chinese stokers and the remaining crew in case the *Sydney* refused to take the *Buresk's* crew aboard her. While the *Buresk* lay stopped, the *Sydney* fired a live shot over her, whereupon she signalled to the *Sydney* in Morse—"There are English-men aboard" (the steward and cook of the *Buresk's* original crew). The *Sydney* answered: "Haul down your flag," and the flag was then hauled down and sunk. About half-an-hour later a cutter with two officers and a prize crew of about ten men came aboard. The prize-officer demanded that the *Buresk* should follow the *Sydney* to take over the *Emden's* crew, but was told that the boilers had been blown out and that the ship was sinking. The *Buresk's* crew was then ordered to take to the boats and join the *Sydney*, and the *Sydney*, after taking the men aboard, took in tow the two boats and steamed back slowly to North Keeling Island.

Meanwhile on the *Emden* the engine-room, the boiler-rooms, and also (for fear of danger from fire) the magazines were flooded, the guns were made unserviceable by throwing overboard the breech-blocks and destroying the sights, the torpedo-director was thrown overboard, and all the secret papers that had not been already burnt were

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destroyed. The torpedo-room was now full of water from the leak already mentioned; the main fires were smothered as far as possible. The wounded were attended to by Staff Surgeon Dr. Luther; seriously wounded men were brought on to the forecastle. When I had given men leave to swim to land just after we ran ashore, and while the *Sydney* was still firing, several men had jumped overboard and reached the shore about 100 yards away through the surf. Some it seems were unfortunately drowned in the attempt; others were pulled on board again from the water after the *Sydney* had ceased firing. An attempt was then made by paying out a line to establish a hawser communication with the island, in order, by means of a breeches-buoy, to transfer to the shore the personnel still left on board, together with provisions and drinking water. But all attempts to effect this, both on this and the following day, failed because the strong current setting across prevented floats from reaching the shore, while the line usually got hooked behind coral-rocks, and then broke.

About 4 p.m. the *Sydney* was again sighted to the westward. As she had two boats in tow, we imagined that she intended taking the survivors on board. When a fairly long distance from the *Emden* the boats were cast loose, and the *Sydney* steamed past the *Emden's* stern at a distance of about 4,300 yards. As she had international signals flying I sent a Morse message by flag—"No signal-book aboard," for our signal-book had been burnt. When the *Sydney* had passed our stern and lay aft on our starboard quarter, she opened fire again unexpectedly with several salvoes, by which several of my men were killed or wounded, and fresh fires were started. I again gave the crew leave to abandon ship if they could swim and wanted to, as I did not know how long the *Sydney* would go on firing, and this seemed to be the only possibility of escape. A number of the crew went overboard; some reached the island, some were drowned in the attempt (among them the capable Torpedo-Artificer Pyttlik), some were afterwards dragged back on board. As the *Emden* was now incapable of fighting, and lay a helpless wreck on a coral reef, I ordered a white flag to be shown in token that the rest of the crew surrendered, and at the same time had the ensign, which was still flying at our main-mast head, hauled down and burnt.[27] Thereupon the *Sydney* ceased fire.

The commander of the *Sydney*, Captain Glossop, afterwards gave me the following explanation of the firing. After the *Emden* had sent the Morse-signal "No signal-book aboard," he had twice asked us by Morse-signal "Do you surrender?" This was either not seen or not understood aboard the *Emden*. As he had no reply, and the ensign was still flying at the masthead, and no white flag was shown, he believed that the *Emden* wanted to continue the fight, and therefore gave the order to fire. This explanation cannot be considered a very sound one when one remembers that the *Emden* during the last phase of the fight had been unable to fire her guns any more, that she was lying a wreck on the reef, and that by her signal "No signal-book aboard" it was implied that she was ready to negotiate. I can I think say that in his place I should not have behaved so, but that I should have sent a boat to the *Emden*, probably under a flag of truce. I had

[27] It is recorded that a few days later, when a prisoner in the *Orvieto*, von Müller said, "When the flag was eventually pulled down, it was pulled down by my own cabin servant. I had him with me and he went along the deck, which was very hot in places, and reached the flag. It was a plucky action."

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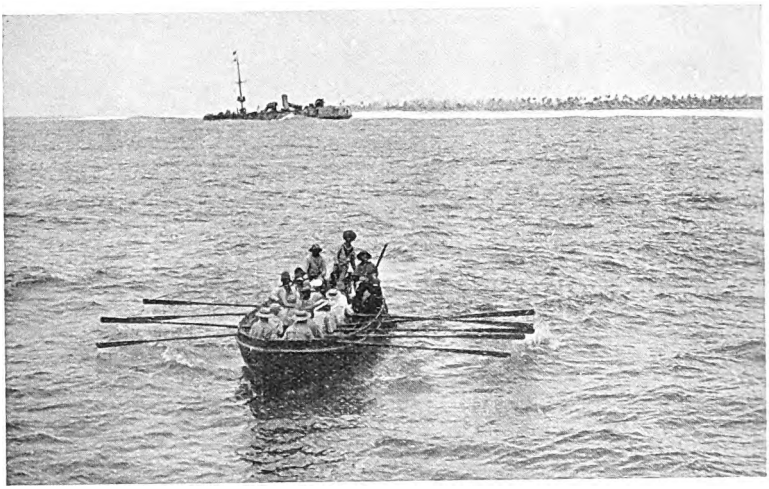

A LIFE-BOAT OF THE *Sydney* BRINGING SURVIVORS FROM THE *Emden* TO THE AUSTRALIAN CRUISER, 11 NOVEMBER 1914

Lent by R. Cardwell, Esq., and "The Zodiac."

THE GERMAN LANDING PARTY ON DIRECTION ISLAND COMMANDEERING PROVISIONS FOR THE *Ayesha*

Lent by R. Cardwell, Esq., and "The Zodiac."

To face p. 201.

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also the impression that the whole transaction was later on very painful to Captain Glossop himself, and that he had let himself be persuaded into the affair mainly by his first officer.[28]

After the firing had ceased the *Sydney* went back to pick up the boats she had cast loose, and sent one of them, with men from the *Buresk* under the orders of Sub-Lieutenant Fikentscher, to the *Emden* with the message that the *Sydney* must first make sure next morning what had happened on Direction Island, and would then come back to rescue the survivors. Luckily the prevailing weather on this and the following day was good, so that with some difficulty boats could lie at the *Emden's* stern.

I did not consider it quite certain that the *Sydney* would come back, for I expected that Lieutenant-Commander von Mücke and his landing party would at once set about defending Direction Island and give a hot reception to any English boats that came along. Also it was doubtful whether on the next day boats would be able to come alongside. Consequently I renewed the attempt to establish communications with the land, but, as already described, without success.

About 1 p.m. on the 10th the *Sydney* came back and sent two boats with an officer to the *Emden* with the information that the commander of the *Sydney* was ready to take aboard the survivors of the *Emden's* crew, and to rescue any of them who were on North Keeling Island, if I would pass my word that none of our crew would commit a hostile act against the *Sydney*. I agreed to this. Transhipping was, on account of the prevailing swell, naturally difficult, but was completed with comparative ease; the wounded were first transhipped, then the unwounded. I was the last to leave the ship; before doing so I had, with the help of a few of the officers, petty officers, and crew, fired the forward part of the ship in the 'tween-decks and the battery deck, after pouring over it turpentine and oil, of which, fortunately, we had a very small stock. The ship was still burning next morning, but my hope that she would be quickly and completely destroyed was unfortunately not fulfilled. The commander of the *Sydney* sent his gig to tranship me, although I had heard beforehand that this would be done and had urgently requested him to refrain from doing so. The taking off of the men on the island was not attempted until the following day, as in the meantime darkness had already fallen; but, to get them ready for transhipping, Sub-Lieutenant Schall was put ashore on the evening of the 10th and stayed the night on the island. During that night Surgeon Schwabe, who had swum to land, succumbed to his wounds.

The after-part of the *Emden* had settled down still more on the 10th of November, so that at high water it was flooded to within three feet of the upper deck. On the following morning one could see the waves from time to time breaking right over the upper deck. The ship was lying with two-thirds of her length actually on the reef. The heavings and concussion caused by the swell to the after-part of the ship were so violent that it seemed as if she must break in two in a comparatively short time. The longitudinal structure of the hull, however, was so strong that it was a very long time before this happened.

On the 11th of November, after taking aboard the petty officers and men from North Keeling Island, the *Sydney* proceeded to

[28] This is, of course, very unfair both to Glossop and his officers. *See pp. 188-9.*

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Colombo. The treatment of prisoners of war aboard her was good, and I must particularly recognise the great care that was taken of the wounded.[20] On board the *Sydney* Engineer Sub-Lieutenant Stoffers, a petty officer, and two men died of their wounds. On the 13th the slightly wounded and some of the unwounded were transhipped to the auxiliary cruiser *Empress of Russia* in order to make room on the *Sydney*. On the 15th the *Sydney* reached Colombo, where all the wounded were landed and placed in hospital, and all the other survivors of the *Emden's* crew were distributed among various steamers of the convoy, to be taken to Malta.

Condition of the crew who were in the fight: (*a*) killed, drowned, or succumbed to their wounds after the fight, 7 officers, 1 staff paymaster, 4 warrant officers, 25 petty officers, 92 men, 1 civilian cook, 1 barber, and 3 Chinese laundrymen; (*b*) severely wounded, 1 warrant officer, 3 petty officers, 17 men; (*c*) slightly wounded, 2 officers, 2 warrant officers, 9 petty officers, 31 men; (*d*) unwounded, 6 officers, 5 warrant officers, 39 petty officers, 67 men. The losses were especially heavy among the gun-crews and the ammunition-carriers. I think I may state definitely that in this action, which unfortunately led to the destruction of His Imperial Majesty's ship *Emden*, everyone of the officers, warrant officers, petty officers, and men under my command did his duty.

During her three months' cruise the *Emden's* engines had made 10,000,000 revolutions, representing a course of 30,000 miles. By the good work of the engine-room crew and stokers under the able leadership of Engineer-Lieutenant Ellerbroek—who was effectively seconded by Engineer Sub-Lieutenant Stoffers for the main engines, Engineer Sub-Lieutenant Andresen for the auxiliary engines, and Engineer Sub-Lieutenant Haas for the boilers—serious engine troubles during the cruise were avoided, and even minor mishaps were very few in number.

V

The convoy, meanwhile, had proceeded on its way. When the *Sydney* disappeared, the *Melbourne* resumed her normal place in advance of the transports; but, when about 9.30 a.m. the *Sydney* reported by wireless that she had sighted an enemy cruiser steering northwards, the *Melbourne* moved over to the

[20] Of the treatment of the wounded and other prisoners, Prince Franz Josef of Hohenzollern in his book *Emden* (*p. 194*) says: "One can only say that in this connection an enormous amount was done, and the medical personnel put itself to all conceivable trouble to help the wounded and as far as possible alleviate their pains. . . . The feeling of being in captivity was hard and bitter; but the English officers went to all sorts of trouble to alleviate the bitterness of the position or to cause us for a time to forget it." Korvetten-Kapitan R. Witthoeft, in *Unsere Emden* (*p. 273*), says: "The treatment which we received aboard the Australian cruiser was unquestionably good . . . both the doctors and their attached personnel wore themselves almost to the bone." The German writers contrast their treatment in the *Sydney* and *Hampshire* with what they regard as the unnecessary severity enforced upon their transfer to the Australian transports. Captain von Witthoeft, imbued with German military notions, not unnaturally makes some fun of the "undisciplined" volunteers of the 9th Battalion in the *Omrah*, in which he was confined. It may be doubted whether his countrymen who met them a little later would have been so critical.

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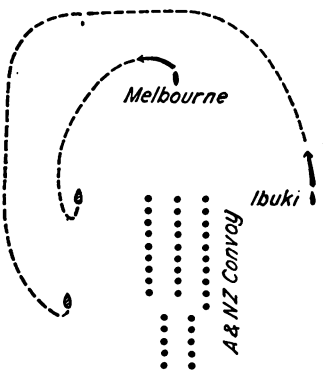
convoy's exposed south-western flank, and called the *Ibuki* to join her. The *Ibuki* was not by any means willing to do this; she too had received the *Sydney's* message, and at once hoisted all her battle-flags, cleared for action, and started at full speed to follow the *Sydney*;[30] but the safety of the convoy was the primary consideration, and she had to be restrained. At 11.15 came the message "*Emden* beached to avoid sinking"—the first definite statement identifying the enemy as the *Emden*, though everyone knew it must be that ship or the *Königsberg;* and the immediate danger being over, the convoy was again set on its route. To quote the log of the *Melbourne:*—



11.30 a.m. Proceeded N. 32° W. at 16 knots.

For another day and night the utmost precautions were enforced, since the *Königsberg* was still unaccounted for. Then came the news that she had been located on the African coast;[31] the Indian Ocean was thus clear of enemy ships,[32] and convoys could do without close guarding. Further, on the 31st of October war had broken out with Turkey, involving the urgent need of more warships in the eastern Mediterranean and more secure protection for the Suez Canal. The convoy's organisation was therefore broken up while at

[30] A photograph of this fine spectacle is given in *Vol. I, at p. 101.*

[31] It is not quite clear why this news was so long in coming. The *Königsberg* was discovered in hiding up the Rufigi River on October 30, and the fact was known in London next day. If the *Sydney* had known it on the 9th of November, she would have succoured the *Emden's* wounded much earlier and more efficiently.

[32] The effect upon Eastern trade of the *Emden's* operations may be judged from the contemporary fluctuations in the insurance rates, and also in the prices in Great Britain of raw material (*e.g.*, jute) from the East: "Hitherto the insurance of cargoes for the Eastern markets had been left mainly to the State Office, but the destruction of the *Emden* was followed by an immediate fall in underwriters' quotations for war risks from 60*s.* to 40*s.*, and they would have gone still lower had not the outbreak of war with Turkey led to some anxiety concerning the safety of the Suez Canal. By the latter part of the month, when it became clear that the situation in Egypt was well in hand, the premiums dropped to 35*s.* and 30*s.* bringing them below the State Flat Rate, and they soon fell to a still lower level." *Seaborne Trade, Vol. I* (British Official History), by C. Ernest Fayle, *p. 336.* The price of jute, which had risen sharply, fell as sharply after the destruction of the *Emden.*—(*Rural Scotland during the War.*)

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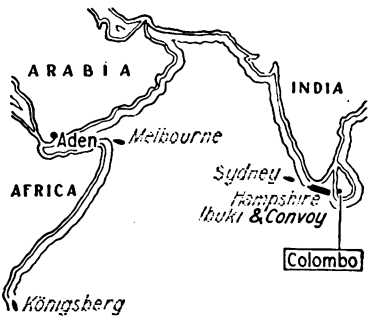
sea, and its escort altered in character. Thirteen transports went ahead to coal and water at Colombo; the rest followed with the *Melbourne* and *Ibuki;* the *Sydney,* delayed as we have seen, took her own course and reached Colombo on the 15th just in time to see her sister-ship off to Europe. The *Hampshire,* which had taken over from the *Melbourne* before reaching Colombo,[33] now became the flagship of the escort, and, with the *Ibuki,* took the convoy on to Aden—not, however, in the old marshalled and restricted order, but by divisions sailing independently according to speed. At Aden the whole convoy was re-assembled during the 25th, sailed next day for Suez, passed through the Canal on the 2nd of December and following days, and began to disembark troops at Alexandria on the 3rd.



Very different tasks awaited the two Australian cruisers when they left their fellow-Australians at Colombo. Immediately on receiving news of the *Sydney-Emden* fight the Admiralty telegraphed to the Naval Board:—

> As the Pacific and Indian Oceans are now clear of all description of enemy ships, Admiralty desire to utilise *Melbourne* and *Sydney* for service in the Atlantic Ocean, where fast cruisers are urgently required. Ships have accordingly been ordered to Malta.

The *Melbourne,* as we have seen, left Colombo on the 15th of November for Malta, which she reached on the 29th. Taking three days to complete with coal and stores, she sailed for Gibraltar on the 2nd of December, intending to carry out target practice there and otherwise to increase her fighting efficiency. But after only five days' stay she was ordered on the 9th to join at once a cruiser force under Admiral

[33] Admiral Jerram, always careful of Dominion interests, had, before the *Emden* was located at Cocos, ordered the *Hampshire* and *Empress of Russia* to join the convoy. On learning that the *Emden* was at Cocos he ordered the *Empress of Asia* also to hurry thither. All these orders were too late for the ships to be within three days' steam of the convoy on 9 November.

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de Robeck; the enemy cruiser *Karlsruhe* had been reported off the Bahamas,[34] and every available light cruiser was requisitioned to hunt her down. Four days later, therefore, she was detached with orders to proceed *viâ* Bermuda and St. Lucia to the northern coast of South America; and her subsequent career falls within the scope of a later chapter.

The *Sydney* followed close in her track, reaching Malta on the 3rd of December, and Bermuda on the 6th of January, 1915.

VI

To round off the story of the *Emden* and her destruction, a few minor episodes may be dealt with here; the escape and adventures of the party that landed on Direction Island, the further results of the S.O.S. appeals from the cable station, and the later fate of the wrecked ship. The story of the actual landing on Direction Island, as narrated by an officer of the cable station then present, is given in Appendix No. 18.

Von Mücke, the officer in charge of the landing party, is (as has been previously mentioned) a very untrustworthy authority even for events within his own knowledge. No better evidence of this can be needed than his account of his departure from Cocos, which he bases on the assumption that the fight was still in progress. Shortly before sunset, he declares, both the *Sydney* and the *Emden* were in sight not more than ten miles away and both firing; "at sunset the *Sydney* broke off the engagement and steered in a north-westerly direction. *Emden* was heading easterly. . . . . The landing force leaves Keeling in the *Ayesha* in order to seek the *Emden*. . . . Not until three weeks later, on their arrival at Padang, did they learn the fate of their ship." So positive is he, that he stigmatises "the English version that the fight lasted only one hour" as another addition to "the numerous other English lying reports of a similar nature."

It was not till the 15th of November that the *Sydney* brought to Colombo news of the *Ayesha's* escape; and by that time von Mücke was well on his way towards Padang, having carefully explained to the cable staff at Cocos that he would make for German East Africa. Near Padang, which was

[34] Falsely. She had in fact been destroyed, by an explosion following on a collision, on the 4th of November, when in a position about due east of Trinidad and north of French Guiana.

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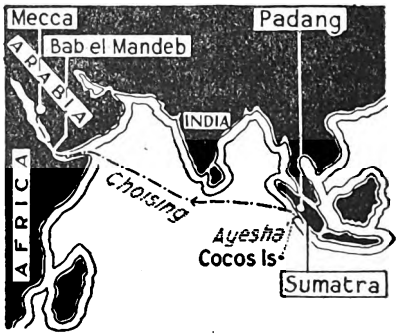
reached on the 27th, the *Ayesha* was met and shepherded by the Dutch destroyer *Lynx;* and at the port the strictest neutrality was observed, though several sorts of stores refused by the Dutch had already been surreptitiously supplied from German merchant-vessels sheltering there. Under threat that the *Ayesha* would be seized by the Dutch, von Mücke left the next day after dark, and made for a rendezvous the position of which he managed to communicate to the German steamers at Padang. On the 14th of December, one of them, the Norddeutscher-Lloyd coastal steamer *Choising*, picked him up. In this vessel he and his party traversed the Indian Ocean, slipped through the Strait of Bab-el-Mandeb, and were landed on the 8th of January near Hodeida on the Arabian coast. An unsuccessful attempt to get inland was followed by a daring voyage in small Arab sailing-boats up the coast towards Jiddah, the port of Mecca; and in the end the party reached railhead of the Mecca railway, and so returned safely to Germany. Although von Mücke's own account contains exaggerations and other inaccuracies, we can yet see much to praise in his audacious escape across a well-guarded ocean and through constantly patrolled archipelagoes of the Red Sea.



The messages from the Cocos cable station, both by wireless and by cable, were of course intercepted or received at many other places besides the convoy's wireless rooms. To the Naval Board a cable message came about noon, "Warship three funnels at Cocos Island landing men 7 a.m."; even Cape Town seems to have picked up the wireless, for the Intelligence Officer there sent the news across to Melbourne during the day. But these receptions would not have been worth recording, except to clear up a misunderstanding which might otherwise puzzle the future historian.

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Immediately on receiving the cabled message, the Board ordered the Perth wireless station to send out the news *en clair* three times an hour, and this was done—but not, of course, till some time after noon, by which time the *Emden* was ashore on North Keeling Island. However, in the confusion some official at the Admiralty, knowing nothing except what the Board had cabled to London, and having no clear statement before him of the times and sequences of events, generously came to the conclusion that

> the *Sydney's* success was only rendered possible by the prompt action of the Naval Board in passing on to the *Sydney* the information received from Cocos;

and the Admiralty thereupon expressed to the Commonwealth's Naval Representative its appreciation of the good work done. There is nothing to criticise in this, and everything to praise—the Board's promptness in action, the Admiralty's promptness in recognition. But, in view of the formal character of that recognition, it becomes necessary to emphasise the fact that the *Sydney* acted on the *Melbourne's* orders after direct interception of the warning from Cocos, long before any message from Perth could have been received—and that in fact no message from Perth was received.

There is a certain dramatic value in the facts of another reception. The Federal Cabinet was sitting when the first cable message arrived; continuing its session, it received later on the news of the *Sydney's* attack—and gave her three hearty cheers. Cabinet meetings are not often so diversified.

The wreck of the *Emden* was visited shortly after the departure of the *Sydney* by the auxiliary cruiser *Empress of Japan,* which brought away the signal log and other mementoes. At the end of November, and again in the following January, the wreck was inspected by H.M.S. *Cadmus.* In 1915 a Japanese firm offered to repair and refloat her, and the little *Protector* was sent off to report on her condition and salvage such guns, &c., as might be recoverable. The wreck, however, was already too battered by the waves to admit of refloating; and a visitor to the Cocos group in 1919 reported that almost all traces of the *Emden* had disappeared.

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CHAPTER VIII

SERVICE OVERSEAS: MALAY ARCHIPELAGO

WE have seen that by the end of 1914 Germany had neither warships at large nor colonies uncaptured in the whole area of the Pacific Ocean. This did not by any means involve her abandonment of that area to her enemies. On the contrary, it preluded greater and more dangerous activity on her part, not improvised after the failure of her legitimate war machinery, but planned long beforehand as an essential—possibly as the most essential—part of that machinery. There is, indeed, reason to believe that the German war-plans against the outlying sectors of the British Empire were far more dependent on local intrigues, and the anticipated disaffection to follow, than on any armed forces or military preparations.

The account now to be given of these intrigues, so far as they affected the Pacific and Indian oceans, is based on the results of two important inquiries—the San Francisco conspiracy trials in 1917, and the Rowlatt Sedition Committee's investigations made in India in 1918. It must not be imagined that the facts as here set forth were fully known to any British agency in 1915-16, when the danger was imminent and the intrigues were actually defeated. At the time it was necessary to fight in the dark, and the success in which Australian warships played so considerable a part was due rather to constant vigilance and even excessive precautions against all possibilities than to acute prevision or accurate foreknowledge of the enemy's plans.

Just as the German plan of campaign against Australia was based rather on the supposed disaffection of Australians and their alleged impatience of Imperial bonds, so the plan directed against Britain's Eastern possessions assumed a widespread disaffection in India, which it endeavoured to encourage and turn to good account. In the usual German blustering fashion, no secret was made of the general intention. Bernhardi in 1911 suggested that a union of the disaffected Bengali population with the up-country Mohammedans might shake the British Empire to its foundations. In March, 1914, a Berlin newspaper gloated over the troubled Indian situation, pointed out that secret societies of anti-British tendency were

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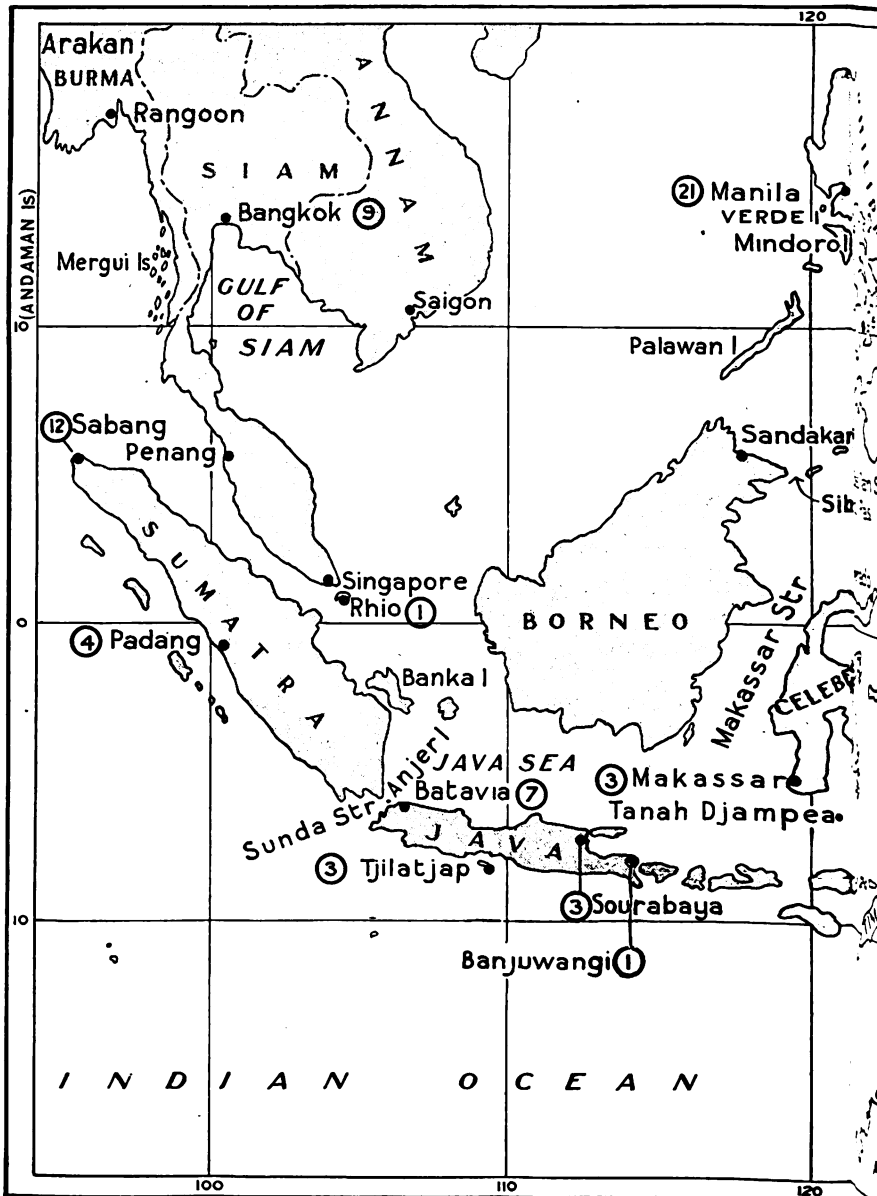

THE MALAY A

The figures indicate the number of enemy vessels

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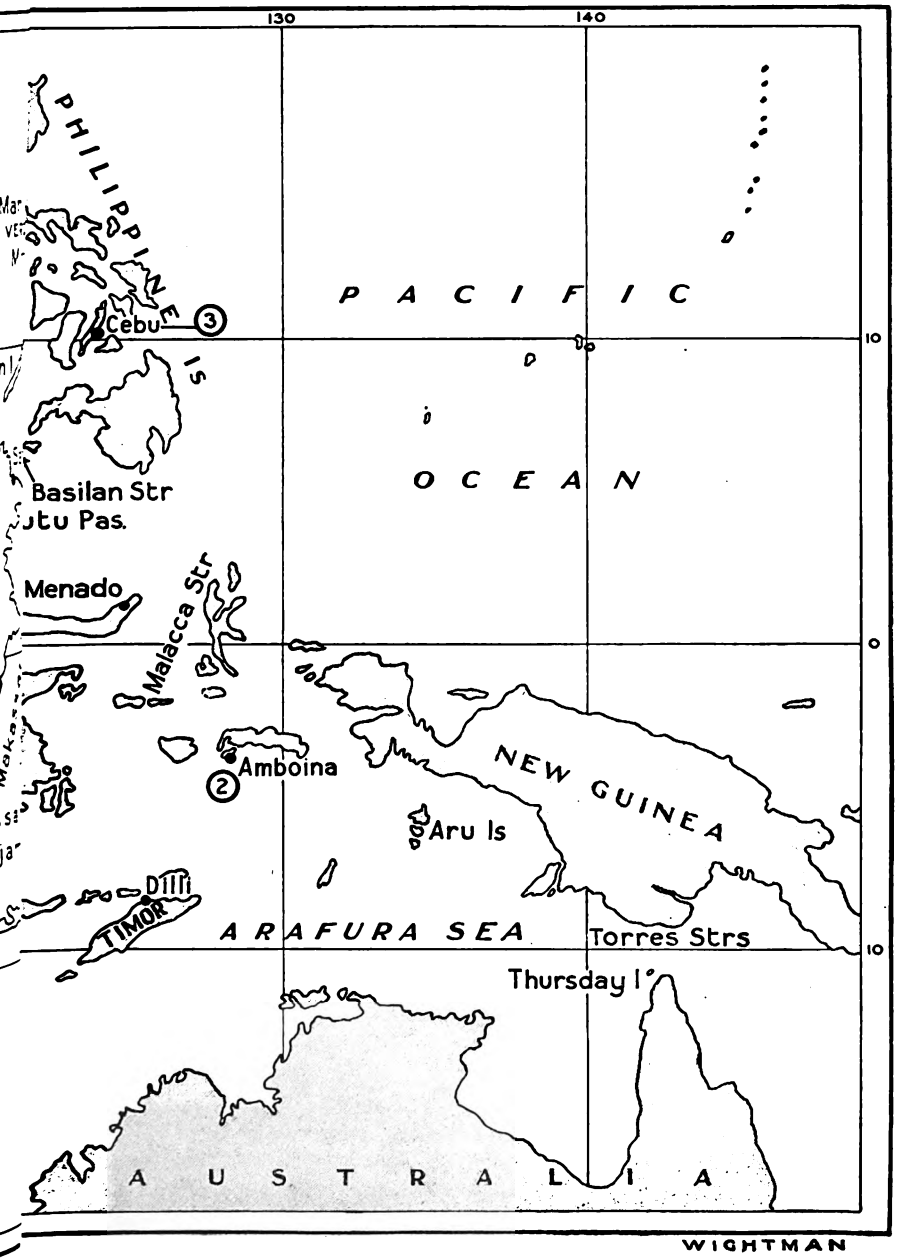

CHIPELAGO

sheltering at one time in certain neutral ports.

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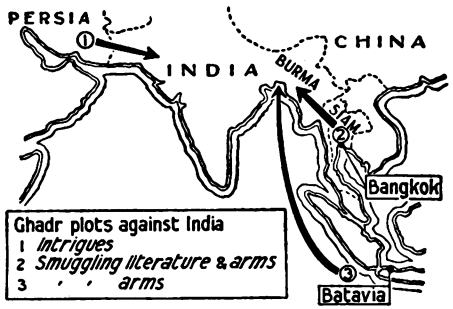
at the bottom of it, and indicated California as the home of an outside organisation ready to provide any Indian rebellion with arms and explosives.

This organisation, known as "*Ghadr,*" was actually of German origin. Even before 1911 it had been devised by young Indian revolutionists, instigated and aided by German agents. When the war broke out in 1914 its leader was in Europe, and became a member of the "Indian National Group" resident in Berlin and attached to the German General Staff. In consultation these two bodies devised a triple scheme for an Indian revolution, involving intrigues in Persia and on the north-west frontier of India, the smuggling of literature and arms — possibly of armed forces—across the frontier between Burma and Siam, and the smuggling of arms in very large quantities from the United States by sea into Bengal. The second of these schemes was to be immediately directed from Bangkok, and the third from Batavia; but both were under the general direction of the German Consul-General at Shanghai, and the ultimate controlling authority was in the German Embassy at Washington.



On the success of this gun-running from the United States projects for a rebellion on a very large scale were based. Thirty thousand rifles were expected, twelve million rounds of ammunition, and at least £13,000 in cash. On their arrival, bridges on the three main railways leading into Bengal were to be destroyed, Calcutta was to be sacked, and a party of German officers brought over in the same vessel was to raise and train a revolutionary army in Eastern Bengal.

The vessel on which all this fabric of intrigue depended was the *Maverick,* an old oil-tanker bought from the Standard Oil Company by a German firm in San Francisco. She left the

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port of San Pedro in California on or about the 22nd of April, 1915, carrying five Indians of the "*Ghadr*" as stewards, and a quantity of seditious literature, but no arms[1] or explosives. The cargo intended for her had already been shipped in a slow sailing-vessel, the *Annie Larsen,* which had slipped out of San Diego in great secrecy, and was popularly imagined to be taking munitions to one of the revolutionary armies in Mexico. The *Maverick* was ordered to make rendezvous with this vessel at Cocorro Island (600 miles off the Mexican coast), take over her cargo, and proceed with it to Anjer Island in Sunda Strait. A series of mishaps which need not be recounted in detail prevented the meeting at Cocorro, and the *Maverick* sailed for the Hawaiian Islands, with orders to reprovision there and meet the *Annie Larsen* at Johnston Island. At Hawaii, however, the *Maverick's* master talked unwisely, and the local German agent made up his mind that she had attracted too much attention to be of any further use in the conspiracy; orders were therefore given that she should merely reprovision the *Annie Larsen* when met, and should then make her way to Batavia in the ordinary course of business.

The *Annie Larsen* never was met. She hovered round various islands and Mexican ports, managed to get herself well suspected everywhere (at Acapulco she actually had to appeal to a United States warship for protection against threats of the Mexican Government), and at the end of June turned up at Hoquiam (Aberdeen) Harbour in Washington State, where her cargo was seized by the local authorities. Consequently the *Maverick* was compelled ignominiously to put in at Batavia without having effected anything she had been intended to

[1] It was asserted at the San Francisco trial that the various parts of a "knocked-down" submarine were stowed away in the *Maverick* while she was at San Pedro: but the evidence is not convincing.

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achieve; she was searched from end to end by the Dutch authorities—who, finding no munitions, concluded she had jettisoned them somewhere on the high seas—and remained there for two years, since British warships were kept just outside ready to pounce on her the minute she left neutral waters.

About the same time, a small schooner with auxiliary screw, the *Henry S.*, tried to get away from Manila in the Philippines with five Germans, two Indians, and a cargo of rifles and ammunition. She was concerned with the Bangkok section of the intrigue, but was no more successful than the other two vessels. The United States authorities confiscated her cargo, and after a short voyage the *Henry S.* herself broke down and had to take shelter in a port in Celebes.

This was by no means the end of the affair. The German Consul-General at Shanghai had already planned another series of gun-running expeditions, employing one vessel to carry arms direct from Shanghai, another to be despatched from a Dutch Malaysian port to pick up her cargo at sea, and a third (also from a Dutch port) which was to visit the Indian penal settlements at Port Blair in the Andamans, release and enlist the convicts, and then raid Rangoon. Moreover, the ports of the Dutch Indies sheltered seventy-four German merchant vessels, which were, of course, free to depart at any moment if they chose to run the risk of capture on the high seas; and in most ports—particularly in Makassar—there were small, but very active German colonies, eager to distinguish themselves by promoting and aiding attacks on British commerce and British possessions in eastern Asia. And while by the Dutch officials neutrality was strictly observed, it was impossible to enforce the same strictness on the whole Dutch population—especially as German agents were persistently spreading the malicious rumour that Japan had been bribed into the war by a promise of some at least of the Dutch islands later on.

It will thus be seen that the situation in Eastern waters during 1915 was by no means peaceful or secure. The comparatively obvious dangers of 1914, arising from the operations of the German squadron in the Pacific and those of

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the *Emden* (one of whose primary objects was to stir Indian disaffection) in the Indian Ocean, were far easier to detect and to overcome. For the gallantry and daring which carried the navy in those seas through the early months of the war it now became necessary to substitute dogged and persistent watchfulness, the plodding endurance of apparently resultless patrols, the deadly monotony of life spent in small ships on tropical seas. It is hardly to be wondered at that to men and officers alike their duties occasionally became hateful—that they resented their condemnation to dreary inactivities or to operations unfailingly trivial, while their brothers and friends were making the Australian name immortal in Gallipoli. But Australians who served in Malaysia in 1915-16 have no reason to regret or disdain that service. It was no less essential, though much less conspicuous, than the long struggle at Anzac. It was typical naval work—preventive, not remedial; hygienic, rather than curative; and its very dullness and apparent resultlessness were the incontrovertible proofs of its success.

II

The full strength of the German intrigues was not, of course, known either to the Australian or to the British authorities till much later. But something was known—the proposed gun-running into Bengal, the existence of anti-British organisations in San Francisco, and, later, the designs on the Andamans. The energetic officer who at the outbreak of war had been German naval attaché at Tokyo had, when Japan entered, made for San Francisco where he controlled the German naval agency through which von Spee's squadron had been coaled off the South American coast before and after Coronel. It was not to be expected that von Spee's destruction would also put a stop to all its activities. At the end of 1914 the naval staffs at Shanghai, Batavia, and Manila were still at work, as were others at Valparaiso, La Plata, and New York; and the withdrawal of some of these[2] merely left the business in other hands.

[2] The German naval agency or "base" at Shanghai suspended work early in January, 1915, was ordered in April to sell its coal, and was withdrawn in May. The naval staff at Manila sold its coal in 1915 and was withdrawn; that in Batavia was withdrawn early in 1915. The campaign of intrigue, however, remained very active.

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To the Naval Board the first definite news of the new intrigue came in an Admiralty message of the 15th of March, 1915:—

. . . American sailing vessel *Annie Larsen* which sailed from San Diego on 9th March for Topolobampo loaded 14,000 rifles, 4,000,000 cartridges, and 400 cases of powder. Reports as to real destination . . . are very conflicting. . . It is rumoured that arms and ammunition are for German attack on British interests in Pacific.

Incoming vessels were from that moment asked for reports of the *Annie Larsen,* outgoing vessels were ordered to report her if sighted, and the authorities on Fanning Island were particularly warned. They pointed out in reply that Christmas Island, about 140 miles away to the south-east, had been used as a rendezvous by von Spee in 1914, was quite uninhabited, and would be an excellent dépôt for arms and construction-base for submarines.

Three months passed without further news; then on the 17th of June another Admiralty message introduced the *Maverick:*—

American steamer *Maverick* now at Hilo appears to be suspicious—vessel cleared from Cocorro Island ostensibly for Johnston Island. . . Master boarded German steamer *O. J. D. Ahlers*[2] immediately on arrival Hilo, and he and master of latter vessel have been in local office of German firm of Hackfeld together.

A week later came news that the *Maverick* had left Hawaii for Anjer, probably carrying cargo transferred from the *Annie Larsen.* Then followed scrappy details of information—a Honolulu story that the *Maverick's* crew was a mixture of Marshall Islanders, Solomon Islanders, Mexicans, and Javanese; another, received *viâ* Fanning Island, that this "mixed crew" had "avowed intention of destroying Fanning Island cable station"; another, emanating from an ingenious Honolulu editor, that Germany had established a submarine base in the Pacific, using it to assemble parts of a "knocked-down" submarine. The Intelligence Officer at Singapore contributed the additional information that an American schooner carrying four Germans, two Hindus, and 200 cases of munitions was leaving Manila, probably to join the *Maverick,* about the middle of July.

Nothing of this was as yet within the Board's sphere of operations, but preparations were at once made to give help

[2] This steamer of the Hansa line had originally been sent from Tsingtao under escort of the *Cormoran* with coal for von Spee's squadron, which it met at Majuro. After the coaling at the Marquesas it had been sent to Honolulu.

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wherever it might be needed. The Admiralty was asked to divert the *Orama* (then on her way from Chile to dock and refit in Sydney) to examine Christmas Island; when the Admiralty replied that it was too far out of her way, the *Encounter* was hastily made ready to proceed to Fanning Island. On the 14th of July the Board was able to report:—

> Three destroyers with oiler now near Townsville can be sent Thursday Island or farther at once. *Encounter* and *Psyche* could leave Sydney 16 July if required.

The mention of the *Psyche* introduces another chain of contemporaneous intrigue. It will be remembered that the schemes of the German General Staff, mentioned earlier in this chapter, included action in Persia and on the north-western frontier of India. With this, of course, Australia was not directly concerned. But in the redistribution of British squadrons nominally belonging to the Pacific area the old small cruiser *Psyche* and the survey ship *Fantome* had been stowed away, so to speak, in Port Jackson. When the situation on the coast of Persia became dangerous, the Admiralty bethought itself of these out-of-date but not yet useless vessels, and on the 21st of June the Board was asked whether it could man them with Australian crews for service in the Persian Gulf. As usual, the reply was prompt. The *Psyche* should be commissioned on the 1st of July and be ready to leave Sydney on the 15th; her crew must necessarily consist very largely of untrained ratings, but as many trained men as possible would be included. The *Fantome* at the moment had no guns; by taking two from the *Psyche* and one from the *Gayundah*, and using three old British 12-pounders that were still in store, a respectable armament was provided for her, and she was commissioned on the 27th and ready for sea on the 7th of August.

But the various *Maverick* rumours had by the middle of July convinced the Admiralty that the eastern rather than the western approaches to India were the area of greatest danger. Their reply to the Board's message of the 14th of July was therefore an order to despatch the *Encounter* instantly to Suva and Fanning Island, visiting Christmas Island thereafter, while the *Psyche* was to be kept in Australian waters. Almost at once, however, the situation began to clear up. On the 16th

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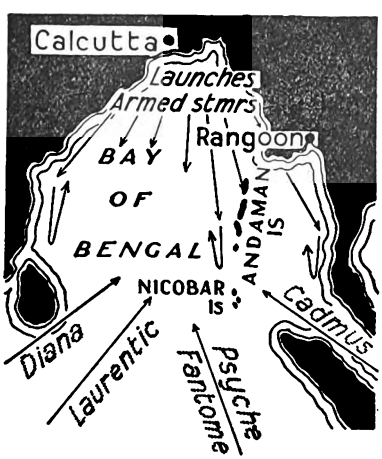
news came that the *Annie Larsen* was on the Oregon coast of the United States. On the 21st it was known that the *Maverick,* in custody of Dutch destroyers, had reached Batavia the day before, and that she carried no munitions. She might, of course, have transferred them to some other vessel on the voyage, for not till nearly the end of August was definite information received that the *Annie Larsen's* cargo was still in her.

At the beginning of August, it would seem, the Shanghai series of plots came to the knowledge of the Admiralty. On the 6th the *Psyche* was ordered to Singapore:—

> An extensive German conspiracy is on foot to cause a rising in Burma and India, involving smuggling in very large numbers of rifles.

On the same day the *Fantome* got her sailing orders for the Persian Gulf. Both ships were to proceed *viâ* Torres Straits. They left Thursday Island independently on the 25th, reached Singapore on the 4th of September—and then the *Fantome* found herself equally involved in the eastern troubles, and her Persian Gulf trip vanished into thin air. The Bay of Bengal had become the danger area, and the Andamans its most important centre. Accordingly a system of patrols was established, and to conduct it warships were, it might almost be said, commandeered from all over the world. The *Diana* came from the Mediterranean, the *Laurentic* from the Cape of Good Hope, the *Cadmus* from the China station: the *Psyche* and *Fantome* joined them from Australia; the Government of India provided small armed steamers and launches, manning them from the Royal Indian marine. The launches scouted persistently along the coastline; the armed steamers patrolled farther out to sea, under



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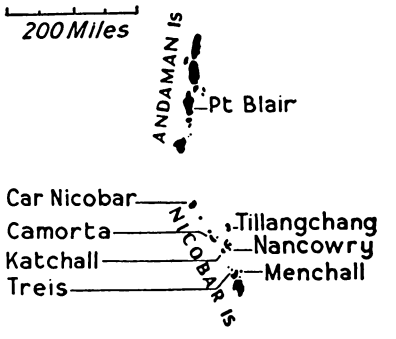
the direction of the *Laurentic* (based on Calcutta) and *Psyche* (based on Rangoon). The *Cadmus* and *Fantome* carried out a separate patrol of the Andaman and Nicobar groups from a base at Port Blair. The *Diana*, with the whole bay for her sphere of action, was in general charge of the whole scheme.

By mid-September all the warships were in position and the patrols in working order. All shipping—and there was a great deal, mostly small craft that could easily escape notice—was closely watched, and usually boarded and examined. All places where arms and ammunition might be landed—and the deltas of the Hooghly and Irawady are full of such places—were repeatedly searched and continually kept under observation. By way of countering the expected attack on the Andamans, it was arranged "to receive the raiders" (as the Commander-in-Chief of the China Squadron once cheerfully phrased it) with a military expeditionary force specially imported from Singapore.

It is useful to apprehend correctly the monotonous and wearisome nature of this patrol work. An extract from the *Fantome's* official narrative runs thus:—

> Coaled on 10th November at Port Blair. *Cadmus* arrived and communicated; she then sailed.
>
> Sailed at 10 p.m. for Nicobars. . . Arrived off Car Nicobar on 11th; found there two brigs, one bugaloe—papers in order and searched by Government agent.
>
> Searched Tillangchang Island *en route* to Nancowry. On arrival at Nancowry, 12th November, found Chinese junk No. 403 from Penang and Sabang, having left latter port 6th November. A thorough search was made and nothing suspicious found. She carried a crew of 14 and 21 passengers, all Chinese. The passengers were for opening shops at various Nicobar islands. . . . They mentioned another junk as likely to arrive from Sabang shortly. Then proceeded to Treis Island, arriving there with lights out after dark on 12th; landed observation party (three hands) with provisions and



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camp equipment for five days. Landing was carried out successfully and unobserved. Ship then proceeded to vicinity of Menchall Island and anchored for the night. . .

On 13th November landed early abreast ship, and ascended hill to see if it could serve as an observation post for Pulo Milo; owing to the dense foliage this was found to be impracticable. Returned to ship and weighed at 10 a.m., proceeding to Pulo Milo; found there a bugaloe with Government agent on board.

From information received from him proceeded to Ganges Harbour —found it empty; natives reported junk having sailed previous night, and seen to north-east at daylight on her way to Nancowry.

It being then dark, returned to Treis Island, communicated, and thence to Nancowry; there being no signs of junk, I left the same morning (14 November). . . Searched South Bay in Katchall and east side of Camorta, and then proceeded to the southward.

And so the narrative goes on, day after day. Sometimes a junk was caught without a permit, or with too many passengers, or loitering suspiciously long in out-of-the-way harbours. In such cases the entry reads:—

Landed armed guard and all passengers, also owner and master of both junks, and locked them up.

There is nothing specially heroic or even exciting about this class of operations: it does not stir the reader as the *Sydney-Emden* fight may have done. The whole proceeding is petty; there is more excitement about arresting a pickpocket. For that matter, the arrested junk-owners and passengers were quite probably no worse than pickpockets; that is, they may have been merely dishonest traders trying to evade some local regulation, sneaking about from island to island during the war just as they had done in peace-time.

On the other hand, there was always the chance that they were something very different—cunning tools of the enemy, feeling their way towards Port Blair, and studying the habits of the British patrol, in order to evade its ships when the raid on the Andamans should be brought off. The more obviously they were mere tramp hawkers, the more probably they were dangerous spies. But it is easy to understand, seeing that this story of five days was repeated *ad nauseam* for nearly six months, how the pettiness and the monotony fretted the young Australian crews. Yet the commander of the *Fantome* was able to report:—

The ship's company are shaking down very well, and cheerfully accept the discomforts incidental to our patrol work. These are mainly due to the incessant wet weather we have experienced, their cramped quarters, inability to get their clothes dry, continually being

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at sea in anything but smooth water, &c. The conditions have otherwise been favourable—comparatively cool and even temperatures (about 80°) with south-west breezes, and not much night work.

It was not life in the trenches. But then it was not, to the minds of the average Australian crew, fighting at all. It was just pottering about strange jungly islands in the wet, with your clothes never dry and your home for goodness knows how long in the "cramped quarters" of a stuffy, steamy ship that had never been designed for either war services or tropical voyages. Most certainly the crews grumbled and belittled their work, and felt ashamed to be there instead of on the Peninsula. Probably there was more discontent than the commanding officer cared to admit officially. But the work was done, and done thoroughly; the plots, which had been very real and dangerous plots, came to nothing; India remained unharmed and tranquil, and the Empire could concentrate its fighting power on the decisive struggle in Europe. The Australians who manned the *Fantome* and *Psyche* in 1915-16 most certainly did not like their job; but, now it is all over, they may be reasonably proud of having done it.

III

The work of the *Psyche* differed in details from that of the *Fantome*, but was essentially of the same nature—work with little recognition but of great responsibility. She was employed, as has been already mentioned, on patrols of the coast of Burma with a base at Rangoon—ten- to twelve-day patrols alternating with two- to four-day stays at the base. Her experience of bay weather was not good; if she went north she ran into extreme heat; if south, into heavy rains; and she was never really free from sickness.

Being in charge of this section of the Bay of Bengal, she was responsible for what may be called three "beats"—the Arakan and Lower Burma coast, the upper Tenasserim coast (Moulmein to Tavoy Island), and the lower Tenasserim coast. Each "beat" was watched by an armed sea patrol of three or four launches for work close inshore; and the prime *raison d'être* of the patrol was the thorough examination of suspicious vessels—that is to say, of practically *all* vessels. As said the orders:—

With the exception of British or Allied vessels known to be employed on local or overseas services, all vessels sighted—whether flying British, Allied, or neutral flags—are to be regarded with suspicion.

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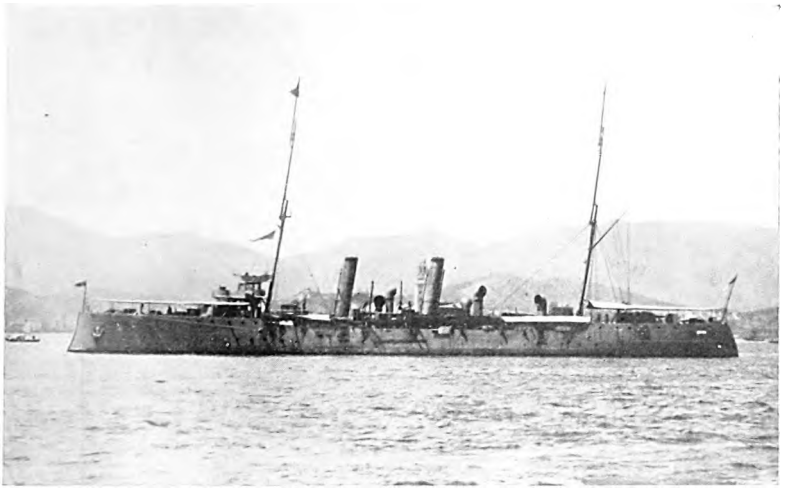
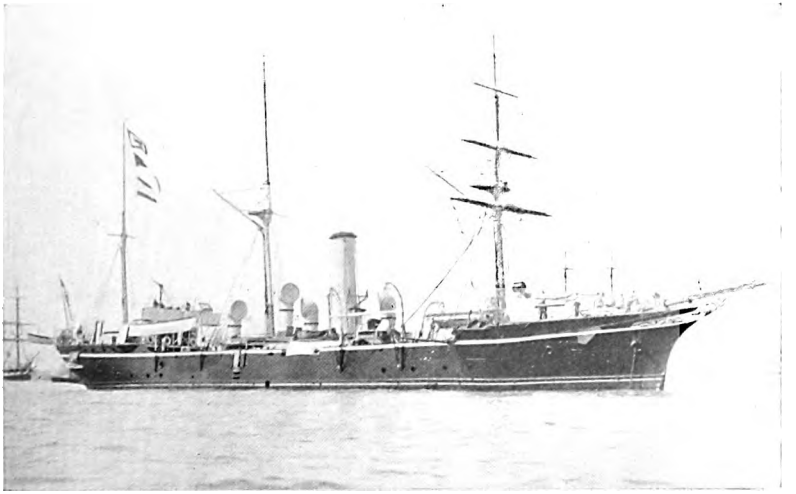


H.M.A.S. *Psyche* AT HONG KONG

Photo. by Atting, Hong Kong.



H.M.A.S. *Fantome*

British Official Photograph.
Aust. War Memorial Collection No. A2550.

To face p. 218.

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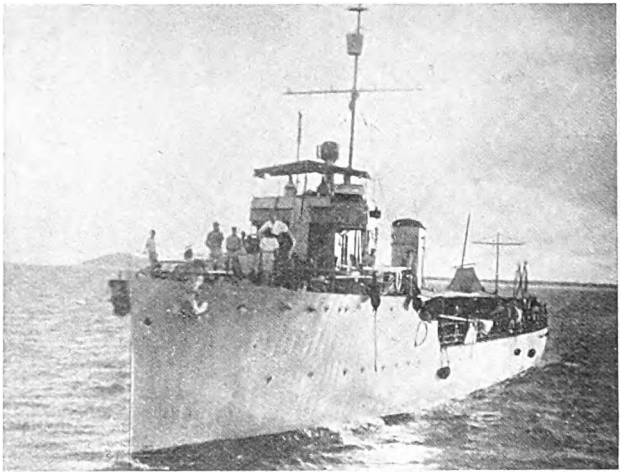
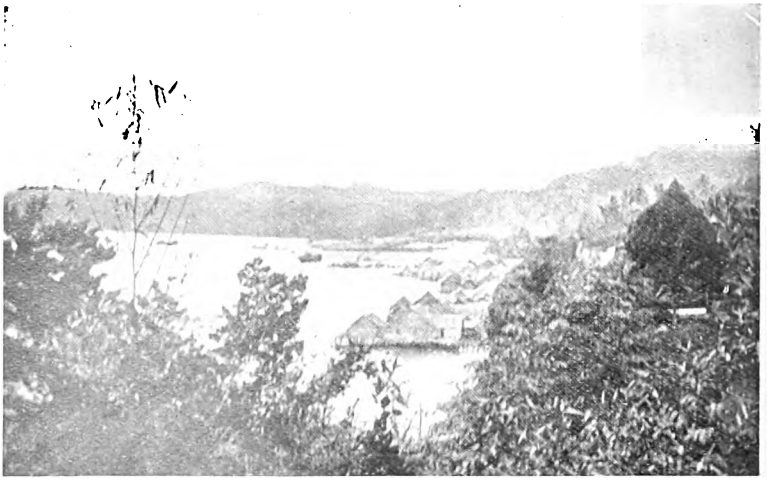


H.M.A.S. *Torrens* AT SINGAPORE, FEBRUARY 1917

Lent by Paymaster-Lieut. D. Munro, R.A.N.
Aust. War Memorial Collection No. EN389.



SANDAKAN HARBOUR, BRITISH NORTH BORNEO, USED AS A BASE FOR AUSTRALIAN DESTROYERS OPERATING IN THE EAST INDIES

Lent by Engineer-Commander O. A. Ireland, R.A.N.
Aust. War Memorial Collection No. EN416.

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Examination was not, of course, the *Psyche's* main task; that was left to the smaller craft.

About the middle of January, 1916, it seems to have been definitely ascertained that the German plots against India had collapsed, and that the centres of intrigue had been removed from Shanghai to island ports in the neutral territory of Dutch and American Malaysia. The bay patrols were therefore dispensed with, and the operations of most British warships transferred to the seas east of Singapore. The *Fantome* was shifted to Sandakan in British Borneo. The *Psyche,* however, having demobilised her "Burma coast patrol," was left in the bay with Port Blair in the Andamans as her base, to be in perpetual readiness to visit any part of the bay, whether under direct orders or on her commander's own initiative, if he had reason to believe her services were required. Further, periodical patrols of the Sumatran coast must be maintained.

This arrangement, however, did not come immediately into effect, because the *Psyche* had to be recalled to Singapore for inquiry into a certain lack of discipline which had made itself manifest,[4] and was then detailed to escort some Russian transports towards Colombo. On April 4th she handed this convoy over to H.M.S. *Venus,* and began her task of guarding the bay from Port Blair. This meant, of course, constant cruising over large areas; she was at Penang on the 18th, at Rangoon on May 13th, at Colombo on the 21st. Then for some reason her sphere of operations was changed, and between the middle of June and the middle of October she cruised off the coasts of Annam and southern China, visiting Saigon, and then basing herself on Hong Kong. At this time sickness was more rife than ever among her crew; at the end of July she had 77 in hospital ashore and 41 more on the sick list aboard.

In October she resumed her bay patrols, showing the flag at Penang, Port Blair, Rangoon, Calcutta, Madras, and Colombo; and so the perpetual weary round went on in what are almost the hottest waters of the world.

[4] Sickness had reduced the number of stokers available for work just when the weather was at its worst and the need of high efficiency in the stokehold most urgent. The consequent discontent led to foolish and regrettable displays of indiscipline. At one time the shortage of stokers was so great that—following a custom of the China station—fifteen natives had to be temporarily enrolled as an "ash and coal-trimming party." They were kept quite apart from the rest of the ship's company, and discharged as soon as other ratings became available.

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1917.		
15th February	..	Cruising Mergui Archipelago.
19th February	..	Patrol duties northern entrance Malacca Straits.
26th February	..	Proceeded on a cruise in search of raiders or enemy bases in the Nicobar and Andaman Archipelagos.
12th March	..	Arrived Rangoon.
20th March	..	Proceeded to Penang. Escorted military transport to Calcutta.
8th April	..	Escorting military transports India to Burma.
16th April	..	Cruise of examination in Andaman and Nicobar islands.
2nd May	..	Resumed escort of military transports between Rangoon and Calcutta.

The insertion of this bald statement from the *Psyche's* official diary has its purpose. It is typical, and therefore instructive. That is war from the navy's side. One set battle in five years: perhaps half-a-dozen minor engagements, involving from one to half-a-dozen ships on each side: and this cruising, cruising, convoying, patrolling from year's end to year's end in all the Seven Seas, as wearisome, as persistent, and as essential in the bitterest North Sea winter as in the steam-heat of the Bay of Bengal and the Persian Gulf. Years of it, and nothing to show for it: but on its persistent efficiency the whole fabric of the war in France rested secure.

Early in 1917 the Naval Board—which was still responsible for providing the *Psyche* with reliefs, but had at this time no other control over her—suggested to the Commander-in-Chief, China Squadron, that for many reasons it might be well to send her back to Australia. But he was very reluctant to do so:—

H.M.A.S. *Psyche* is most useful to meet raider or submarine threats in the Bay of Bengal. Consider bay should not be left without such safeguard, and have no other ship to spare for duty.

Three months later, however, when the United States had entered the war and the need of small British cruisers in the Atlantic had lessened, the Admiralty decided to send H.M.S. *Suffolk* out to the China station. That ship reached Singapore on the 11th of August, and at the end of the month the Australian warship was at last headed for home. Slowly—for her bottom was so foul that she could only maintain 75 per cent. of her normal speed—she made her way to Timor, and Thursday Island, and Townsville; and on the 28th of

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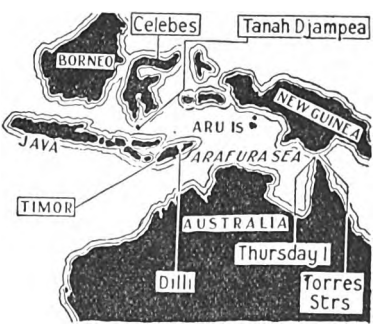
September—two years and forty-three days after she last left Sydney for her patrol within the tropics—she dropped anchor in Port Jackson and went out of active service.

IV

We left the destroyer flotilla[5] being docked and overhauled during September, 1915. It, too, was to be drawn into the net of patrols spread to catch German plotters against India. On the 14th of October the Naval Board received from the Commander-in-Chief, China Squadron (then at Singapore), news of a rumour that

German base for munitions exists either off Java, Timor Island, or vicinity of Celebes Island,

coupled with a request that the Board should undertake the duty of watching the area between the southern end of Makassar Strait and the Aru Islands off Dutch New Guinea. A later message particularly stressed the desirability of visiting Dilli in the Portuguese part of Timor, where useful information might be obtained from our Allies. Moreover, the *Maverick*, still lying in the port of Batavia, was expected to sail at any moment, and must be pounced on whenever and wherever found outside neutral waters.



It so happened that the Board had already arranged a programme for the destroyers. On the 5th of October they were ordered to proceed at an early date to Torres Straits, in order that the best methods of defending that passage might be decided on after full investigation; the *Una* was to join them there. The request from Singapore was therefore promptly dealt with by ordering the flotilla to leave Sydney on the 19th, make direct for Thursday Island, and take along

[5] *See p. 146.*

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charts of Java, Timor, and the Aru Islands. On the 25th Cumberlege reached Thursday Island, where he found the *Una* and the French gunboat *Kersaint*[6] awaiting him. The latter ship sailed almost immediately for Dilli, the flotilla with the *Una* following on the 28th and reaching Dilli four days later. Immediately there was instituted a thorough search of the neighbouring islands, as rumour attributed to several of them the site of alleged German submarine bases or store-dépôts; but neither the natives nor occasional European residents had any knowledge of strange visitors or of store-dépôts, and it was found possible to neglect for the future rumours affecting the Timor or Arafura seas. Cumberlege therefore took the flotilla westwards to Makassar, looking in on the way at Tanah Djampea,[7] where, according to other

[6] The *Kersaint* (a gunboat of 1,243 tons, used as a despatch boat) had by then been re-armed. *See footnote on p. 63.*

[7] This and other visits to Dutch islands between November 1915 and July 1916 evoked from the Dutch Government complaints that the *Fantome*, *Una*, and Australian destroyers had violated Dutch neutrality. The Dutch view was that belligerent warships should not at any time pass through neutral waters, unless (*a*) damage or stress of weather forced them to run to port, or (*b*) they merely wanted to complete their supplies of food or coal. In such cases a twenty-four hours' stay in port was permissible. A special regulation laid down by the Dutch Government, and promulgated in orders on the British China Station on 2 July, 1916, included the following: "Neither the occupation of any part of this domain by one of the belligerents . . . . nor the passage through the inland (territorial) waters of belligerent warships or vessels assimilated to these is allowed." The British Commander-in-Chief (then Vice-Admiral W. L. Grant) directed that wherever possible this rule must be respected, but that "the issue of such a regulation should have been governed by a reasonable regard to the possibility of enforcing it; otherwise a plain injustice is done to the more scrupulous of the belligerents." Obviously if, in sparsely inhabited parts, the enemy disregarded the regulation, it could not be observed by the British. The Dutch Government however, complained not only that Australian ships had passed through Dutch waters, but that men had been landed for exercise, swimming, and shooting, and had on one occasion "taken coconuts without paying for them." Upon the Admiralty referring the matter to Admiral Grant, the latter replied that officers of the Australian Navy, and also British officers serving in Australian ships, had "shown a want of discretion and a lack of appreciation of the serious responsibility resting upon them when brought into touch with neutral rights and neutral susceptibilities." Indeed, in all cases except one, the officers responsible had belonged to the Royal Navy; the admiral, however, threw part of the responsibility upon the Australian Naval Board, since the Board, as far as he knew, had not expressed disapproval of these actions. On learning of the Dutch complaints, the Naval Board issued orders to prevent any such technical violations, some—if not all—of which, it is fair to add, were committed before the Dutch special regulations were made known to the officers concerned. The Naval Board at the time shared Admiral Grant's belief that the Dutch authorities could not properly patrol all outlying islands, and the visits of the destroyers, which were looking for possible enemy submarine bases, had been arranged after consultation with the Commander-in-Chief, China Station, and with the knowledge of the Admiralty. Later information has proved that the Dutch Government, as the story of the *Emden* (*see p. 167*) shows, carried out its duty as a neutral not only fairly but effectively. Certain Dutch merchant captains, on the other hand, were responsible for serious difficulties. For example, on 31 July, 1916, the captain of the *Van Waerwyck* caused much trouble to the *Huon* by keeping his engines at slow speed after pretending to stop, and thus moving, with the *Huon's* boarding officer on board, towards Dutch territorial waters. On reaching the three-mile limit, the Dutch captain pointed out his position, and the boarding officer had to be withdrawn.

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rumours, a German warship had stranded earlier in the war and had been towed off by a Dutch ship. Nothing suspicious, however, was to be found there.

At Makassar the *Una* was taken into port to complete her supplies, and was welcomed by the Dutch officials and residents. The flotilla then separated, the *Una* and *Yarra* scouting along the eastern coast of Borneo, and the *Warrego* and *Parramatta* working up the western side of Celebes. When they rejoined company at Sandakan, about the 20th of November, a message from the Board told them that

> flotilla should not be absent from Australian waters longer than present duties necessitate,

and asked for an approximate date of return. But "present duties" were more imperative and more continuous than the Board suspected. The China Squadron at once took the Australian ships over for patrol work in the Archipelago, and, when the Commander-in-Chief was asked how long he proposed to keep them, he replied:—

> Hope to retain services of Australian Squadron so long as present German schemes constitute a menace. This depends on developments.

Reports of German activity in widely separated places were reaching him, and he feared that the Germans might be forming bases for arming some of their merchant steamers then lying in neutral ports. So urgent, indeed, did he consider the need, that the *Encounter* also had been requisitioned for Malaysian work. That ship, as has already been stated, was made ready in July to leave for Fanning Island, and left on the 21st; on the 27th she was at Suva, reached Fanning by the 13th of August, and unfortunately ran aground there. However, she landed a small garrison and supplies for the cable station, and with the help of hasty repairs was able to get back to Suva, from which she sailed on the 5th of November *viâ* Thursday Island for Singapore, cruising for a while in the Java Sea *en route,* but going into dock for more permanent repairs as soon as she reached Singapore. At the end of December the destroyers also were brought to Singapore, to assist in a scheme of patrols that covered practically the whole water area between Siam and Java; the *Una* was left to patrol east of Borneo, with headquarters at Sandakan, and was for a short time—the end of

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January and the first half of February, 1916—joined in this work by the *Encounter*. The latter ship was, however, recalled to Australia (which was at the moment absolutely without naval protection) on the 11th of February.

As with the *Psyche* and *Fantome,* it may be interesting to illustrate from official reports the nature of this exacting patrol work. On the 13th of January the *Warrego* and *Parramatta* began a series of searches off Bangkok, and within the next three weeks (out of which ten days were spent at Saigon) had boarded and investigated 48 vessels—11 British, 16 Norwegian, 9 Chinese, 6 Siamese, and single vessels of six other nationalities. On one day (the 30th of January) ten vessels were boarded—a fairly strenuous task. "The steamers seemed to come out," wrote Cumberlege on one occasion, "in batches of half-a-dozen, and what with others inward bound and yet others plying between the river and the island, it means chasing at full speed, sometimes for long distances, to get through them all." During this series of searches a solitary German was made prisoner and sent to Saigon for internment; but a great many more were shut up in Bangkok (Siam at the time being still neutral) because they feared capture—which, indeed, was the result desired. In February it was reported that "movements of Germans in the Gulf have completely stopped"; at the same time German merchant-vessels lying in the Bangkok River were filling up with stores and cargo and preparing for sea, their masters alleging that peace would be proclaimed in March or April. A ten days' patrol of the Gulf in February produced no actual captures out of twenty-four vessels searched; but the master of one vessel (a neutral) "was inclined to be insolent, and stated that he would carry Germans without our ever finding them. Her search," adds the report, "lasted three hours." It will easily be understood that ten days of such work in confined tropical waters (between 10° and 15° north) bore hardly on crews of destroyers; but occasional landings on a good bathing beach in French territory, with the additional advantage of good fishing and a consequent welcome change of diet, brought the men through without excessive sickness. It must here be added that on the 24th of January Captain

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Cumberlege was transferred to the command of the *Encounter,* and Lieutenant-Commander Warren,[8] of the *Parramatta,* succeeded him in command of the flotilla.

A feature of this series of operations particularly interesting to Australians was the use of the Australian ships to show the flag at non-British ports. For instance, the visit of the *Una* to Makassar, to quote a high local authority,

> had a very great effect. Before that time the Germans had been swaying it, as, no British vessel having been seen or heard of in those parts for a long time, they had things pretty well their own way. The visit of the *Una,* which was well known as a German ship, but now flying the white ensign, had an immense effect on the local people and made the Germans furious.

Further, when the *Warrego* and *Parramatta* were sent to patrol off Bangkok, it was arranged that they should be based on the French port of Saigon; and their reception there by the French residents, both officials and private persons, was both very pleasing in itself and helpful in establishing excellent relations between France and Australia before ever an Anzac landed at Marseilles.

The result of all this patrolling was entirely satisfactory. The original German plans, both those based on San Francisco and those emanating from Shanghai, were rendered impossible of fulfilment. "The various vessels," wrote the Commander-in-Chief, China Squadron,

> have been very active and, while a considerable number of arrests have been made, their main function of preventing any communication or travelling overseas by enemy subjects or agents has been admirably carried out; and it may safely be said that the Germans find grave difficulty in developing or carrying out any plans involving a high organisation.

This quotation should be marked, because it lays down not only one of the main objects of naval work in war-time—the prevention of oversea enemy communication—but also the utmost that can be expected of all war-time secret service—that is, not the entire prevention of hostile action, but success in rendering it gravely difficult.[9]

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[8] Commr. W. H. F. Warren, D.S.O.; R.A.N.; b. Logie Elphinstone, Pitcaple, Scotland, 19 Oct., 1877. Drowned in Brindisi Harbour, 13 Apr., 1918.

[9] For fuller discussion on this point *see ch. xiv, section ii.*

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V

Meanwhile the situation in Australian waters had somewhat changed. In the first place, the naval building programme (which the outbreak of war had naturally disorganised to some extent) was again in full swing, and it was clear that during 1916 a light cruiser and three more destroyers could be added to the squadron. In actual fact the destroyer *Huon* was first commissioned on the 14th of December, 1915, the *Torrens* on the 3rd of July, 1916, the *Swan* on the 16th of August, and the cruiser *Brisbane* on the 31st of October. This increase in strength would provide before the year's end both a relief for the flotilla in Malaysia and a certain amount of coastal defence.

But, in the second place, it did not seem altogether safe to wait for these additions. A memorandum laid before the Board early in February, 1916, pointed out that

> the attack on shipping in the neighbourhood of the Canary Islands shows that the Germans have again taken to attacks on trade routes by craft other than submarines. The importance of the transport and trade routes in Australian waters might well decide the Germans to attempt an attack in these waters. . . . The principal danger now appears to be from craft, either minelayers or armed merchant vessels, escaping from Germany, or being fitted out on the coast of North or South America.

It might therefore be wise, the memorandum went on, to ask that the Australian warships in Malaysia and off East Africa should be sent back to Australia,

> and that we should put in force for a time a trade route protection scheme. If this were done at once, we should probably be ready by the time an attack took place. If no attack came, our preparedness would probably be known and have a good effect, and we should have gained very useful experience.

These extracts suffice to show that the Board's advisers were wide-awake and far-sighted; they were a year ahead of German plans, but it is a virtue to have foreseen the *Wolf*[10] even so far ahead.

The Board adopted the memorandum and, through the Prime Minister, asked the Admiralty to let them have back the *Encounter, Pioneer, Psyche, Fantome,* and destroyers, and

[10] *See pp. 342-52.*

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to lend them the *Otranto,* which was at the moment in Port Jackson. On the 8th of February the Admiralty gave what was on the whole a favourable reply:—

> . . . . *Encounter* will be returned to Australia. *Pioneer* will be sent to Australia to pay off and turn her crew over to *Brisbane,* which will for the present remain in Australian waters; and *Otranto* will also be allowed to do so. . . . Admiralty do not consider *Pioneer, Psyche,* and *Fantome* suitable to operate against German raider now at large, as their guns would, it is believed, be much outranged.

As for the destroyers, it was hoped that Japan would take over the control of Malacca Straits, and so set the Australian ships free.

The *Encounter* was released immediately, and left Sandakan for Fremantle on the 11th of February, but was re-directed to Albany while on her way. The *Una,* which was badly needed for work in the Bismarck Archipelago, left Singapore for Australia on the 4th of March. The destroyers were not so lucky. The Japanese destroyers that were to take their place on the patrol arrived at Singapore about the middle of April, but were found unsuitable for the work. Consequently only the *Yarra,* which had been allowed to leave Sandakan on the 8th of May, came back in pursuance of the Admiralty's first arrangement; the others, when they were allowed to go, had to be replaced by the newly-built Australian destroyers."[11]

This replacement was the result of a proposal made by the Board early in June, when it was obvious that the flotilla as a whole was likely to remain long in Malaysian waters. On the 7th the Board suggested to Admiral Grant,[12] then Commander-in-Chief on the China station, that, as soon as all six destroyers were available for service,

> it may be possible to arrange a system of reliefs to avoid keeping the vessels and their crews too long in the tropics without a change, at the same time enabling the work to be carried on without a break.

Admiral Grant offered alternatives—either to organise the full

[11] At the end of April, 1916, the Commander-in-Chief China Station asked the Australian Naval Board for assistance in manning the river gunboats on his station. The Commonwealth Government agreed, offering the crews of *Psyche* and *Fantome* and 400 "trainees" of the Royal Australian Naval Brigade. The need appears to have passed; but Admiral Grant appreciated "the whole-hearted way" in which Australia turned over her navy "for imperial purposes." On another occasion Admiral Grant reported to the Admiralty: "I cannot speak too strongly or gratefully of the broad and imperial attitude invariably acted up to by the Naval Board and of the spontaneous readiness with which it gives all the co-operation and assistance in its power."

[12] Admiral Sir W. Lowther Grant, K.C.B. C.-in-C. China Station, 1915-17; C.-in-C. North America and West Indies Station, 1918-19; b. 10 Nov., 1864. Died 30 Jan., 1929. (He had succeeded Admiral Jerram on 24 Sept., 1915.)

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flotilla in two divisions (one based on Sandakan, the other on Port Jackson), exchanging stations every six months, or to make three divisions of it (based on Sandakan, Thursday Island, and Port Jackson respectively), with exchanges every four months. The former alternative gave three ships to a division, and would be better for the hard tropical service; the latter would afford a certain amount of protection to the northern coasts of Australia, and would safeguard the approach through Torres Straits. The Board without hesitation chose the former scheme, with a slight later modification which based the second division on Albany rather than on Port Jackson, since the danger which they foresaw to Australian trade—the possible raider or mine-layer—was likely to come from the Atlantic *viâ* the Indian Ocean rather than across the Pacific. Accordingly during August the exchange was effected, the *Huon, Swan,* and *Torrens* going to Sandakan, while the *Warrego* returned to Sydney for refit, and the *Parramatta* joined the *Yarra* at Albany.

Meanwhile—that is to say, from February onwards—the two older destroyers (*Parramatta* and *Yarra*) had been shifted to a new station, but had not thereby lessened or lightened their work. After leaving the Gulf of Siam they spent the greater part of March on patrol in the Java Sea between Banka Island and Batavia—a task rendered no easier by the fact that several masters of boarded ships appeared "to be under the misapprehension that the Java Sea is Dutch territorial waters." At the end of March they were definitely transferred to the Sandakan base, and allotted the far more difficult patrol off the western Philippines, with strict orders not to go east of Mindoro Island. A glance at the map will show how easily in that intricate archipelago small coastal vessels could evade the watchers—how easily, too, a ship on patrol might be tempted into territorial waters and a violation of neutrality. The

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fact that no such charge of violation was here laid against the Australian ships is, therefore, evidence of their good handling and skill which the mere record of their work cannot give. Nevertheless that record may be inserted as it stands:—

Patrol.	Ships Employed.	Dates.
Manila Bay and Verde Island passage	*Parramatta* and *Yarra*	3/4/16 to 9/4/16
Palawan Island, E. & W. coasts	*Parramatta* and *Yarra*	15/4/16 to 22/4/16
Basilan Strait and Sibutu Passage	*Parramatta* and *Yarra*	28/4/16 to 2/5/16

The delicate and dangerous nature of patrol work is in some measure indicated by orders issued to the destroyers. One points out that enemy subjects may disguise themselves as natives, especially in an area haunted by innumerable small native craft. It is therefore important to scrutinise the ship's articles very carefully, and to take stock of any officer or man who may have signed on recently; suspicious cases may always be tested by suddenly rolling up the man's sleeves—to make sure that he is of the same colour all over his body. The search of a ship may thus become a delicate matter. The mere boarding, however, may be extremely dangerous:—

> It is almost certain that Germany is attempting to arm ships in all seas for the destruction of commerce. . . . It is quite possible, and even probable, that a raider might be met with without any previous warning. German merchant ships sheltering in neutral ports are quite at liberty to leave, provided that, to the knowledge of the authorities, they have no guns on board at the time; but these could afterwards be shipped on arrival at a secret destination. . . . It is not probable that they would court an action, although if sufficiently armed they might even do so with destroyers. It is more likely they would steam away, and on being overhauled would hoist a neutral flag to allay suspicion, and draw the destroyer into such a position that they could successfully deal with her when she was lowering her boarding boat.

The actual task of patrolling and of boarding vessels was, of course, only one section of the ship's life. Landsmen, picturing to themselves the daily routine of this busy flotilla within ten degrees of the equator, must include in the picture a day at the end of each patrol for gunnery exercises, constant target practice while at sea, and, between patrols, spells in harbour punctuated with more target practice at shore ranges and with repeated route marches and physical drill in the early mornings. As for recreations,

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officers and men play football daily while ships are in port. Each ship has now two teams, Australian and association,[13] and occasionally two games are played in one afternoon—which means that sixty men get one good hour's exercise and recreation.

No wonder that "the boys have developed tremendously and are very fit, and there has been only one case of serious illness among them."

One further note, personal to the Australian crews, may be made here. When Lieutenant-Commander Bond[14] in September transferred to the *Swan* from the *Warrego,* he took occasion to commend especially "the excellent behaviour of the *Warrego's* crew," and noted that "there has not been one case of leave-breaking since the ship has been in British North Borneo waters."

The *Huon* reached Sandakan on the 24th of July, and at once proceeded on patrol along the northern coast of Celebes. The *Swan* and *Torrens* relieved the *Warrego* at Sandakan on the 12th of September, the *Swan* becoming parent ship of the flotilla in Malaysian waters. The patrol work necessarily remained the same, except that enemy activity had taken a new direction, and was fostering attempts to run supplies from the Malay Islands and the Philippines into German East Africa. This, however, did not particularly affect the Australian destroyers, which, with the *Fantome,* continued to be based on Sandakan and to cruise in the Celebes-Philippines area.

The Malaysian work of the *Fantome* deserves a little attention to itself, as it was carried out under exceptional difficulties. She was a slow ship (10–11 knots) fit for night work only, since vessels sighting her in the day-time could easily run into territorial waters. Even at night intercepted vessels sometimes got clean away, and often managed to run so near a neutral coast that the question of the three-mile limit could be raised. On one occasion, for instance,

a vessel was called up at 1 a.m. with the cruiser arc lamp, and failed to reply. A round of blank was fired when close to her, without result. We then chased, and, as she was closing the land, and after an interval we did not appreciably close her, a shotted round was fired across her bows. She then turned round and closed. . . . Captain had no complaints, and gave his position.[15]

[13] That is, one team playing the Australian game and the other "soccer."
[14] Capt. A. G. H. Bond, O.B.E.; R.N. Of London; b. Westminister, London, 10 Feb., 1881.
[15] According to which the nearest land was 3.7 miles away.

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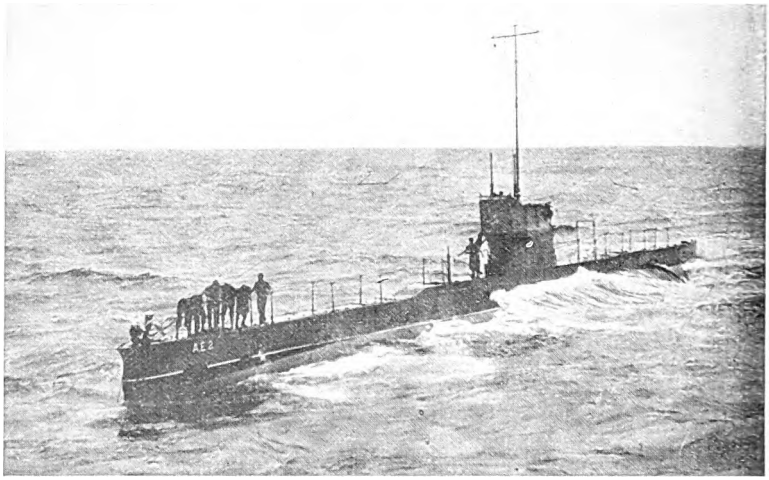
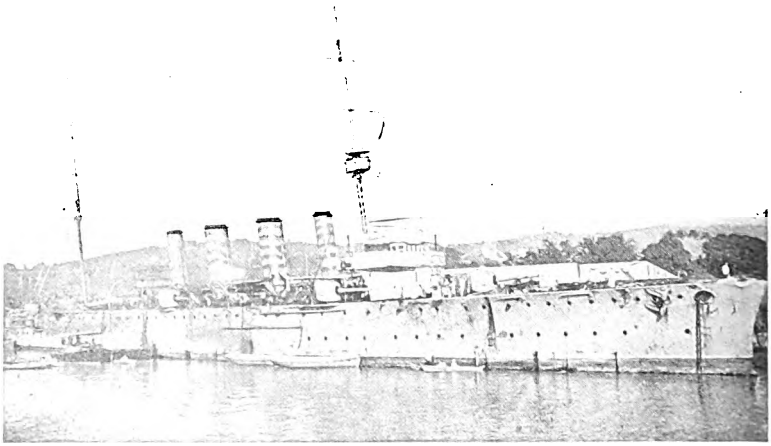


THE *AE 2* BEING MADE FAST TO THE *Berrima* IN THE INDIAN OCEAN, 2 JANUARY 1915

Taken by Pte. H. J. Lowe, A.I.F.
Aust. War Memorial Collection No. A1939.



H.M.A.S. *Sydney* AT MARTINIQUE, JANUARY 1915

Lent by Leading Stoker H. R. Neher, R.A.N.
Aust. War Memorial Collection No. EN230.

To face p. 231.

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Shortly afterwards another neutral vessel complained that she had been boarded within the three-mile limit, and her alleged position was discovered to be $3\frac{1}{4}$ miles off shore by British charts, but only $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles away by charts of the United States. On another occasion a vessel (which turned out to be a Dutch lighthouse tender) refused to respond to signals or to blank rounds, and was found, when stopped at last (about 3 a.m.), to have neither a signaller nor a signalling lamp aboard. Further, the vessels of at least one neutral mail-ship line took to running their trips well ahead—sometimes by as much as two days—of the advertised programme. It may be imagined that the life of a commanding officer in such circumstances was a mere succession of worries; and things were not improved by a sudden outbreak of influenza, which by the end of August had incapacitated 2 officers and 42 men. "We are reduced," wrote the captain, "to 7 stokers and 12 seamen."

The result of all this cruising was that in six months and more no Germans or Indians had been caught, but many had been prevented from taking trips to dangerous localities, and enemy plotting was mainly confined to the centres of Makassar and Menado. Nevertheless it is hardly surprising that the *Fantome's* official message at the commencement of the third year of the war ran:—

> We could all wish for a more active share in operations, and are keeping fit in the hope that such may be the case.

The arrival of the *Huon* and *Torrens* at Sandakan allowed the *Fantome* to proceed to Hong Kong for a refit in October; but she remained on the Sandakan base patrol till the end of August, 1917, and did not reach Port Jackson till the 27th of September, just ahead of the *Psyche*.

It will be remembered that the completion of the destroyer flotilla to its full strength of six ships was intended to result in the relief of the three patrolling in Malaysia every six months by the three at work in Australian waters. Accordingly preparations were made at the end of 1916 to send the *Warrego* and *Yarra* back to Sandakan in January, 1917, and the *Parramatta* early in February. But the previsions of the

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Board already described[16] were now to be justified. On the 8th of January a telegraphic order from the Board to the commodore-in-charge at Sydney said:

it is possible sailing of both vessels may be postponed owing to uncertainty of position of German raider;

and on the 20th the two destroyers were ordered at an hour's notice "to spend two days and one night at sea, exercising, escorting vessels to sea, and covering approach to Sydney." From that moment the scheme of Malaysian reliefs vanished into air, and the *Swan, Huon,* and *Torrens* maintained their valuable drudgery under tropical conditions until the stress of the great German submarine campaign of 1917 called for their departure to European waters.[17]

[16] *See p. 226.*

[17] Extracts from a private diary, which may help to illuminate the work of the destroyers in Malaysia, are given in *Appendix No. 22.*

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CHAPTER IX

SERVICE OVERSEAS: EAST AFRICA, DARDANELLES, NORTH ATLANTIC

A RECENT lecture on the war services of the Australian Navy began with the display of a map of the world. "This," said the lecturer, "is a map of the world; that is where the Australian Navy served during the war." The work of the *Pioneer* in East Africa, the *AE 2* in the Dardanelles, the Naval Bridging Train at Suvla Bay and along the Suez Canal, the destroyer flotilla in the Mediterranean—to say nothing of the *Australia's* long servitude with the Second Battle Cruiser Squadron, the *Brisbane's* search for raiders through the Indian Ocean, and the patrolling and convoy-escorting drudgery of the *Melbourne* and *Sydney* in the North Atlantic and North Sea—sufficiently justify this boast.

I

At the outbreak of war, as has been previously said, the *Pioneer* was allotted first to the Fremantle patrol and then to escort duties with the First Convoy. She joined the convoy off Fremantle, and was just steaming into position between the Australian and New Zealand troopships when her engines broke down badly and the *Minotaur* sent her back to port. Consequently, when at the end of the year ships were urgently needed to blockade the coast-line of German East Africa, where the *Königsberg* had recently taken shelter up one of the mouths of the Rufigi River, the *Pioneer*—small and out of date though she was—came in handy. The need, it would seem, was urgent indeed; for the Admiralty's request for the *Pioneer,* made on the 24th of December, was followed in ten days by a further request for the smaller and older *Protector,* to be employed in actually attacking the *Königsberg.* This project, however, came to nothing. Six-inch guns were the smallest that could be usefully employed against an enemy ship so well hidden and protected; and it was impossible to mount modern 6-inch guns in the *Protector,* while her old 6-inchers—80-pounders which fired black powder—had been broken up because such ammunition was no longer obtainable. The *Pioneer* had therefore to go off by herself.

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Leaving Fremantle on the 9th of January, 1915, she proceeded *viâ* the Cocos group and Diego Garcia to Zanzibar, which was reached on the 6th of February. It was believed that the *Königsberg,* though sheltering beyond range of the effective fire of ships at sea, was still capable of breaking out. The British naval force had therefore a double duty—first of preventing this dangerous cruiser from slipping out again now that she had been definitely located and shut in; second, of preventing supplies coming by sea for her or for the military force under Colonel von Lettow-Vorbeck. For the former purpose, cruisers more powerful than the *Königsberg* must watch the several mouths of the Rufigi, especially during spring tides.

The force off the Rufigi was a most heterogeneous one, including, besides the *Pioneer,* the modern light cruiser *Weymouth,* the less modern *Hyacinth,* the *Pyramus* (sister-ship of the *Pioneer*), the armed liner *Kinfauns Castle,* four armed whalers, an armed steamer, and an armed tug. Formal blockade was proclaimed from the 1st of March, and on the 6th Vice-Admiral King-Hall[1] in the old battleship *Goliath* arrived to take control.

The enemy coast-line was divided into three sections, of which the northernmost (160 miles, from north of Tanga to Ras Kanzi, south of Dar-es-Salaam) was normally patrolled by the *Pioneer* (in charge), *Kinfauns Castle,* armed steamer *Duplex* and whaler *Pickle;* the southern (from south of Rufigi to Portuguese border, 180 miles) by the *Pyramus* (in charge) and one whaler; and the central section, containing the mouths of the Rufigi, by the *Weymouth* (in charge), *Hyacinth,* and two whalers. The admiral remained at Mafia Island in the *Goliath.* There was little traffic to be watched, except native dhows creeping along the coast; but

[1] Admiral Sir H. G. King-Hall, K.C.B., C.V.O., D.S.O.; R.N. Commander-in-Chief, Cape of Good Hope Station, 1912/15; b. Falmouth, Eng., 15 March, 1862.

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certain activity and signalling by the enemy gave the impression that the *Königsberg* intended shortly to escape. Nothing came of it, however. The *Pyramus* had to leave for repairs, the *Goliath* was ordered to the Dardanelles, Admiral King-Hall shifting his flag to the *Hyacinth*.

Information was now received of the approach of a storeship sent from Germany. The *Hyacinth* found her running into Mausa Bay, set her on fire with shells, and shortly afterwards set out with the *Pioneer* to hunt for several days another reported storeship. None was found, and the destruction of the first unfortunately proved incomplete: the Germans salved part of her cargo, which sustained their force in East Africa until the arrival of another storeship in 1916.

The continued existence of the *Königsberg* forced the British again to increase their squadron, and her destruction was urgently called for: of the means attempted, two seaplanes brought by the *Kinfauns Castle,* with 100-lb. bombs, proved unable to fly in the tropics. The delta was pronounced too unhealthy for a landing force. Proposals for raids by small boats with torpedoes were vetoed by the Admiralty, who finally decided upon another means. Three monitors, specially designed for river work, were being sent to the Dardanelles. It was now decided that two of these, the *Severn* and *Mersey,* should be towed to East Africa, their crews going in the *Trent.* In addition, as seaplanes were unsuitable, the Admiralty sent two aeroplanes, to work from Mafia Island.

With this provision, on the 6th of July, 1915, the attack was resumed. The ships had anchored at dusk near their intended stations and at dawn, while the *Hyacinth* and *Pioneer* bombarded the defences of the main (Simba Uranga) mouth of the river, the monitors steamed up the northern (Kikunya) branch, anchored, and began firing alternate salvoes. This, however, seemed to confuse the airman directing the fire, which proved inaccurate. The fire of the *Königsberg,* on the other hand, being directed by officers in trees on shore, quickly straddled the *Mersey,* and, hitting her foremost gun-shield, killed six men and damaged the gun. The *Severn,* now shooting alone, soon hit the

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Königsberg, but, when the *Mersey* reopened fire, range was again lost, and at 3.30 p.m., after firing over 600 six-inch shells with disappointing result, the monitors were withdrawn.

Before the enemy could fully prepare, at 11 a.m. on the 12th of July a second attempt was made, the monitors being ordered to close, if necessary, to 6,000 yards' range. This time the *Königsberg* straddled the *Severn* just as the latter let go her anchor; but the *Severn* opened fire, and quickly hit the enemy. By 1 p.m. the *Königsberg* was burning and had ceased fire—her destruction was afterwards completed by the Germans themselves, though they used her guns later in land defence. After firing 200 rounds the monitors were withdrawn. This day the *Pyramus* had steamed three miles up the river, and the *Pioneer* carried out her firing at about 2,000 yards' range without drawing a reply.

After this action the naval force was reduced and the general blockade resumed. The *Pioneer,* after cruising off the river-mouth in case the enemy attempted a reprisal by raiding Mafia Island, patrolled the southern section of the coast.

By the end of July, it should be noted, this ship had been under way every day for more than six months, except for a few short spells in harbour which totalled nine days in all. On at least one occasion she went to sea with one main engine out of action. On the last day of August, therefore, it was found necessary to send her to Simonstown for a refit, calling in at Portuguese ports on the way to investigate the possibility of traffic in contraband from Mozambique northwards. Returning from Simonstown on the 22nd of October, she made more visits along the Portuguese coast (to Lorenzo Marquez, Beira, Mozambique, Port Amelia, and Ibo), reported at Zanzibar, and then became senior officer's ship on the southern patrol. This task was just as dull as, and probably even more uneventful than, the Malaysian patrols of the destroyer flotilla; the one exciting incident in many months occurred in Nazi Bay on the 20th of December when, for the purpose of obtaining fresh provisions and live stock, an attempt was made to land. This was unexpectedly resisted by a small enemy force firing on the boat sent in:

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two men were wounded; the *Pioneer* retaliated with about fifty rounds from her 4-inch guns, but it was impossible to see whether any damage was done.

Early in February, 1916, in fulfilment of the promise already mentioned,[2] the Admiralty ordered the *Pioneer* back to Australia; but—as with the destroyers—at Zanzibar local needs again overrode the promise, and with the arrival of a new flagship (the *Vengeance*) on the station[3] the order for return was cancelled. This was, however, the beginning of greater activity. Four weeks on the southern patrol ended in a combined attack on Dar-es-Salaam, the capital of the German colony, where the enemy had a so-called "hospital ship" which was suspected to be something of quite another sort. The *Vengeance* and *Hyacinth* stood off the coast, the *Pioneer* being sent close in with orders to open fire if any vessels in the harbour moved; but owing to the dense bush it was difficult to see the effect of the *Pioneer's* shooting, and in the end the fire of all three ships was concentrated on the suspected vessel—full notice having been given, and time allowed to remove any sick from on board—and she was set on fire and destroyed.

Transference to the northern patrol soon followed, with a couple of reconnaissances off Tanga, which port was bombarded on the 13th of June by the *Challenger* and *Pioneer*. Similarly a return during that month to the southern patrol involved a share in the bombardment of Dar-es-Salaam on the 30th of July. This unwonted activity was due to the advance of General Smuts's forces; the naval bombardment of Tanga preluded its occupation from the land side on the 7th of July, and that of Dar-es-Salaam its seizure by both sea and land forces on the 7th of September. The action in July, however, was the last to be shared in by the *Pioneer* herself, though parties from her crew were detached in other warships to take part in the capture of Bagamoyo on the 15th of August.

By this time the naval situation in East Africa was well in hand, as the German forces were being driven inland and

[2] *See p. 227.*

[3] The *Vengeance* arrived at Mombasa on the 23rd of February. On the 13th General Smuts had taken over command in the East African Campaign, and his plans demanded a good deal of naval co-operation.

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contraband traffic by sea was not likely to do them much good. It therefore became possible to let the *Pioneer* go home, and on the 22nd of August she left Zanzibar for Australia, proceeding *viâ* the Seychelles, Colombo, and Sunda Strait. This devious course was adopted because her coaling capacity would not allow of the direct voyage across the Indian Ocean. Coal taken in at Colombo took her to Batavia, and then an interesting difficulty cropped up. As a belligerent warship, she was entitled in any neutral port to enough coal to take her to the nearest port of her own nationality. Her commander put forward the view that she was an Australian ship, and her nearest port, therefore, Thursday Island; but the Dutch authorities, adhering as ever to the strictest interpretation of the neutrality regulations, explained that from their standpoint she was a British warship, and her nearest port Singapore. So to Singapore she had to go, coal there, and make for Port Darwin; and the home-coming did not end till near midnight on the 22nd of October, when she dropped anchor in Watson's Bay, Port Jackson.

It is surely one of the ironies of war that this small and really obsolete ship, dating from pre-federation years, should have seen more actual fighting, and probably fired more rounds in the course of actual hostilities, than any other ship of the Australian Squadron.

Note must here be made of the war service of another small Australian ship, the A.U.S.N. Company's s.s. *Suva,* which in July, 1915, was requisitioned by the Imperial Government for work in the Red Sea. She was fitted out at Garden Island and armed with two 4.7-inch guns; a third gun was taken aboard at Colombo. On arrival at Aden, however, the authorities decided that she was not suitable for the work required of her—the prevention of gun-running between Red Sea ports—and she was sent to Bombay, where her Australian crew left her and returned to Australia. Subsequently, it would appear, the authorities repented of their decision (or their need of patrol vessels increased), for she was manned with British naval ratings and sent back to the Red Sea, where she did good service. It was she that, as senior officer's ship of Captain W. H. D. Boyle, received Lieutenant (afterwards Lieutenant-Colonel) T. E. Lawrence at Yenbo after

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his first visit to Feisal and again later at the same port when Feisal fell back on it.[4] A brass plate in her saloon records the bombardment of five Red Sea towns, and the capture of four, including En Wej, between March, 1916, and December, 1918—it would appear that the Turks at Hodeida refused to take any notice of the Armistice and had to be forcibly expelled from the town long after their government had given in. Another plate records the *Suva's* travels—over 100,000 miles in a little more than four years, including a patrol of the Somali coast in 1916 and some mine-sweeping off Ceylon in 1917.

II

The career of submarine *AE 2*, though much shorter than that of the *Pioneer*, was in its later stages far more dramatic. It will be remembered that *AE 1* disappeared inexplicably while the squadron was at Rabaul in September, 1914. Her consort accompanied the *Australia* to Suva, and returned to Sydney with two of the destroyers when the flagship was at last allowed to sail for the American coast early in November. On the 16th of December, the situation in the Pacific having so far improved that a single submarine was of little use, the Commonwealth Government offered the *AE 2* for service in European waters; the offer was promptly accepted, and she was sent with the Second Convoy (which left Albany on the 31st of December) in tow of the *Berrima* —now merely a transport. As in the case of the *AE 1*, rather less than half the submarine's crew consisted of men born in Australia.

Then she disappeared from public view until the 12th of May, when a press cable from London announced that she had been sunk in the Sea of Marmora, and her crew taken prisoners by the Turks. An urgent enquiry elicited from the Admiralty that this report was based on a Turkish official *communiqué*, otherwise unconfirmed; but on the 19th came more definite news:

> No communications having been received from submarine *AE 2* since 26th April, her loss must be presumed. . . . It would appear that three officers and seventeen men were taken prisoners.

[4] Lawrence (in *Revolt in the Desert*) writes of Boyle, whom he obviously also admires as a man of action, that he "sat on the shadow side of his bridge reading Bryce's *American Constitution* too intently to spare me more than fourteen words a day."

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In April, 1916, it was further ascertained (from a letter written by Admiral de Robeck) that "*AE 2* was the first submarine to make the passage of the Dardanelles into the Sea of Marmora." But for the full account of her achievements Australia had to wait until the Armistice released her commander—Lieutenant-Commander Stoker[5]—from a long and frequently brutal confinement in Turkish prisons.

Then for the first time it was learned that she had been attached, on arrival in the Mediterranean, to the British squadron engaged in the Gallipoli operations. Up to the 25th of April, 1915 (Anzac Day), her part in the fighting was quite uneventful; but on that day Admiral de Robeck, commanding the Eastern Mediterranean Fleet, gave Stoker written orders to attempt the passage of the straits, and added verbally that, when the Sea of Marmora was safely reached, he might take what measures he chose to block enemy traffic between the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. Keyes, de Robeck's chief-of-staff, suggested further that, should the *AE 2* get even as far as Chanak in the straits, she should endeavour to sink any mine-dropping vessels she could see, and should "run amok generally."

Two previous attempts to get through the Dardanelles had completely failed; the obstructions, both natural (*e.g.*, the strength of the outward current) and artificial, were known to be great; submarines diving even at the entrance to the strait had frequently been swept ashore. As an example of difficult and audacious submarine work Stoker's achievement ranks high, and it may therefore be told more fittingly in his own words[6] than in any paraphrase or summary.

"Having proceeded from the anchorage off Tenedos, I lay at entrance to Dardanelles until the moon set, and about 2.30 a.m. on April 25 entered the straits at about 8 knots. Searchlights from White Cliffs, Kephez Point, and Chanak were sweeping the straits. Weather calm and clear. As the order to run amok in the Narrows precluded all possibility of making the passage unseen, I decided to hold on on the surface as far as possible. As I proceeded, the searchlights at White Cliffs, sweeping the lower reaches of the strait,

[5] Commr. H. H. G. D. Stoker, D.S.O.; R.N.; b. Dublin, Ireland, 2 Feb., 1885.

[6] In a very few places technical abbreviations have been translated for the benefit of the unprofessional reader.

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forced me to edge towards the northern shore. At about 4.30 a.m., being then not quite abreast of Swandere River, a gun opened fire at about 1½ miles range from the northern shore. I immediately dived, and at a depth of 70 to 80 feet proceeded through the minefield. During the ensuing half-hour or so the scraping of wires against the vessel's sides was almost continuous, and on two occasions something caught up forward and continued to knock for some considerable time before breaking loose and scraping away aft. Having risen twice for observation in the minefield (which I considered necessary, as *E 15* had run ashore in this vicinity), on arising the third time I found the vessel in good position, rather over to the northern side of the straits, and approaching the Narrows, some two miles distant. The time was then about 6 a.m. In order to take stock of the situation I remained at 20 feet depth with periscope up.

"The sea being a flat calm, the periscope was immediately sighted, and a heavy fire was opened from forts on both sides of the Narrows; the accuracy of this fire made observation through the periscope difficult. I observed a hulk anchored off Chanak on starboard side of Narrows, and several destroyers and some small craft moving in higher reaches. As the hulk might be dropping mines, I decided to attack it, and edged over to starboard with that purpose. A small cruiser, judged to be of *Peik e Shetrek* type, previously unseen, now emerged from behind the hulk; believing this to be more likely to carry mines, I considered it would be better to attack it. At a range of three to four hundred yards I fired the bow torpedo, at the same moment ordering 70 feet[7] in order to avoid a destroyer which was attempting to ram on the port side. As the vessel descended, the destroyer passed overhead close, and the torpedo was heard to hit.

"As the cruiser, dead ahead, might be expected to sink almost immediately, I altered course a point to starboard to avoid becoming entangled with her. At the time I believed the vessel to be in the centre of the straits. About four minutes later I altered back to the original course, and ordered 20 feet. As the vessel was rising, she hit bottom and slid up on the bank to a depth of 10 feet, at which depth a considerable portion of the conning tower was above water.

[7] *i.e.*, that the ship should be submerged to a depth of 70 feet.

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Through the periscope I observed that the position was immediately under Fort Anatoli Medjidieh. As I looked, one of the guns fired, and the flash of the gun almost reached the top of the periscope, which I immediately lowered. For four minutes the sound of shell falling round the boat was continuous, and then, the efforts to refloat her proving successful, she slid down the bank to a depth of 70 feet, with head pointing down the straits.

"I proceeded at 90 feet on port motor, with helm hard aport to turn up straits. When two points off correct course, with head swinging rapidly, I went ahead on starboard motor. Vessel immediately struck bottom on Gallipoli shore, and slid up the bank to a depth of 8 feet. Through the periscope I judged the position to be immediately under Fort Derina Burnu, and further observed two destroyers, a gunboat, and several small craft standing close off in straits firing heavily, and a cluster of small boats, which I judged to be picking up survivors of the cruiser. In this position we remained for five minutes.

"As vessel was lying with inclination down by the bows, I went full speed ahead. Shortly afterwards she commenced to move down the bank, gave a slight bump, gathered way and then bumped heavily. She, however, continued to descend, and at 80 feet I dived off the bank. The last bump was calculated to have considerably injured the vessel, and probably impaired her fighting efficiency; but, as I considered my chief duty was to prove the passage through the straits to be possible, I decided to continue on course.

"In connection with these two groundings, I have to report that the behaviour of the crew was exemplary. In these two highly dangerous situations it was only their cool and intelligent performance of their duties which enabled the vessel to be refloated.

"On rising to 20 feet shortly afterwards, I observed the vessel to be in good position approaching Nagara Point, with the destroyers, gunboat, and numerous other pursuing craft surrounding us on every side. At this, as on all other appearances of the periscope, the destroyers attempted to ram, and I dived to 70 feet. Considering the dangers of rising to take observations in the midst of so many pursuing craft, and the danger of grounding on Nagara Point when near the

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surface, I decided to attempt to round the point without further observation, and proceeded to 90 feet for that purpose. Having made the requisite alterations in course, on rising to 20 feet some time later I found the vessel in good position in centre of strait, heading for Sea of Marmora with Nagara Point abaft the beam, and observed the pursuing craft carrying out tactics below the point; but owing to the calm water the periscope was immediately sighted by the enemy, fire re-opened and the chase resumed. I then dived to 90 feet, and remained at that depth for half-an-hour.

"On rising to 20 feet to observe, I found the pursuing craft in close attendance on every side, and just ahead (one on either bow) two tugs with a wire stretching between them. I immediately dived to 90 feet. Considering the situation, it seemed possible that our position was marked through catching in a drift-net, or by some other means, and I decided to run in on Asiatic shore and await developments, as battery power then remaining was not sufficient to get far out into Sea of Marmora, and thereby gain a fair chance of shaking off pursuit. I therefore altered course 8 points to starboard, and ran aground about 8.30 a.m., lying at a depth of 80 feet.

"About 9 a.m. a vessel passed overhead, and something she was towing hit boat's side and jumped over. From this on vessels continued to pass overhead at frequent intervals. As we were far out of the track of shipping passing up and down straits, I decided they must be searching for us, and about 11 a.m. considered it advisable to move to another place. The leaks occasioned by the last bump had caused a quantity of water to collect in motor bilges, etc., which water it was impossible to pump out, as oil mixed with it would immediately give away our exact position. The water was therefore carried forward, and emptied into beam-tube well. etc. Consequently, on attempting to move off, I found trim had been lost, and all efforts to regain it without coming to the surface proved futile; so we remained in the same position throughout the day, while vessels continued to pass and repass overhead until 7 p.m. At 9 p.m., I rose to the surface, found no ships in sight, and commenced to charge batteries. No ships passed in straits during the night.

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"About 4 a.m. on April 26 I proceeded on surface up straits; just before dawn sighted ships ahead, and dived to attack. As soon as light permitted, I observed through periscope two ships approaching—probably small ship leading, and larger ship astern—both men o'war. Sea was glassy calm, and I approached with periscope down. On hoisting periscope (trained on port beam) I observed ship on line of sight of port tube. I immediately fired, and ship altered course and torpedo missed. I then discovered I had fired at leading ship and found it impossible to bring another tube to bear on second ship (a battleship of *Barbarossa* class) with reasonable chance of success. I therefore did not fire. I attribute this failure to the state of the sea and my personal error in overdoing an unseen attack.

"I continued on course through straits, examined the Gallipoli anchorage and found no ship worthy of attack, so proceeded on into Sea of Marmora, which was entered about 9 a.m.

"About 9.30 a.m. sighted several ships ahead approaching separately on zigzag courses. *AE 2* carried no gun, and had only eight torpedoes, of which two were already expended; I had no intelligence as to the nature of ship likely to be met with, and these ships flew no flag. I considered that, until another submarine joined me in the Sea of Marmora, it was necessary to exercise great care in the expenditure of torpedoes. I therefore decided not to fire unless I was certain of troops being on board the enemy ship, and with this intention dived up close to the foremost ship—a tramp of about 2,000 tons. Passing about 200 yards abeam of her, I could see no sign of troops or ammunition; but, as I passed under her stern, she ran up colours and opened rifle-fire at periscope. I then dived over to next ship, and attacked at 400 yards with starboard beam torpedo. The torpedo failed to hit. I was unable to get within range of the other two ships. Rose to surface half-an-hour later and spent remainder of day on surface charging batteries, making good defects, and examining fishing-boats.

"Shortly after dark, when on surface endeavouring to get wireless connection (in which we were never successful) I was attacked and forced to dive by small vessel; throughout

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the night, whenever we rose to surface, we were attacked by craft within half-an-hour and forced to dive. The want of a gun was a severe handicap at this time.

"At dawn on April 27, whilst still diving, sighted ship approaching from eastward, convoyed by two destroyers, one ahead of her and the other on starboard beam. Dived past leading destroyer and across the bows of another one, and fired bow torpedo at ship—a beam shot, distance 300 yards. The torpedo's engine failed to start, and destroyer, attempting to ram, precluded possibility of second shot. No other ships passed throughout the day. At night, in order to give the crew some rest, lay on the bottom in Artaki Bay.

"On April 28 (a.m.) in dead calm weather attacked small ship convoyed by two destroyers. Fired starboard beam torpedo at 300 yards' range. Torpedo failed to hit, and destroyer, attempting to ram, precluded chance of second shot.

"At dusk sighted two men o'war approaching at high speed from westward. Dived to attack, but when near ships it was too dark to see anything but smoke of one of them. Judging her to be near, fired port torpedo, which failed to hit. Proceeded towards Gallipoli to reach nearest point to receiving ship in endeavour to get wireless connection.

"On April 29 at dawn dived towards Gallipoli, and observed gunboat patrolling head of strait off Eski Farnar Point. Dived under gunboat down strait, and returned up strait showing periscope in endeavour to give impression that another submarine had come through. Destroyers and torpedo-boats came out to assist gunboat in pursuit; having led all up towards Sea of Marmora, I dived back and examined Gallipoli anchorage, but found nothing to attack. Steered out towards Marmora, and, rising to observe some half-an-hour later, found gunboat crossing line of fire of stern tube. As battery was getting low, I wished if possible to end the pursuit, and fired at 700 yards' range. Gunboat dodged, and torpedo passed one yard ahead (this I afterwards learnt). Pursuit then ceased, and I proceeded to rendezvous 5′ north of Kara Burnu Point. Just before reaching rendezvous *E 14* rose close to port bow. Commanding officer of *E 14* directed

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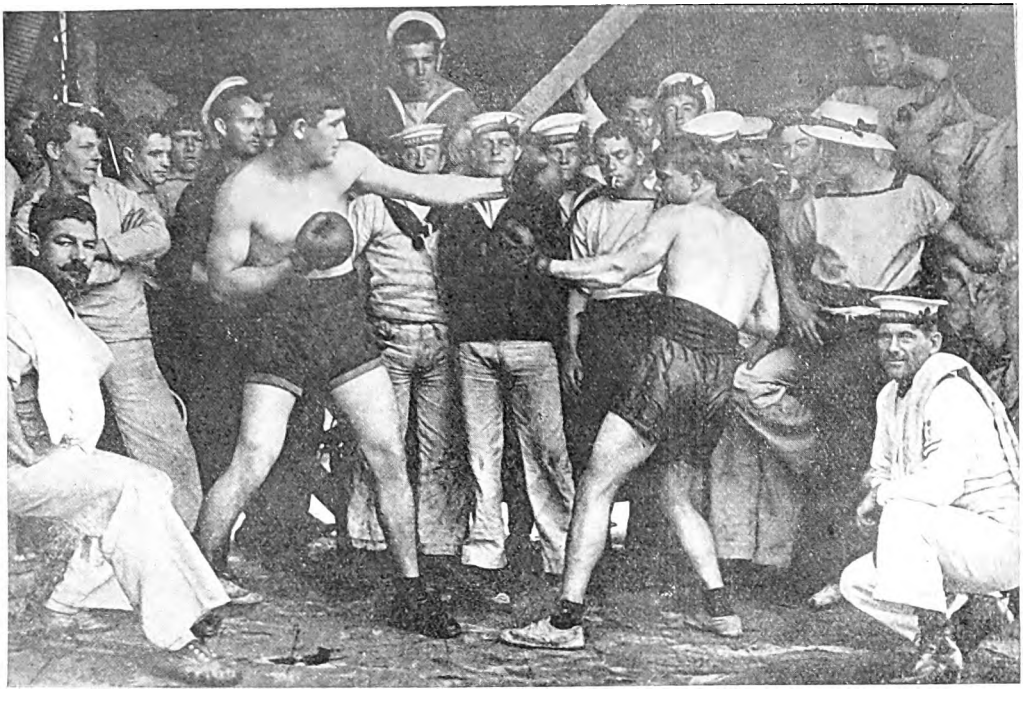

RECREATION ON BOARD H.M.A.S. *Melbourne* AT BERMUDA, 1915

The contestants are Stoker P. F. King and Able Seaman F. W. Parks.

Lent by Seaman Pepper, R.A.N.
Aust. War Memorial Collection No. EN131.

To face p. 246.

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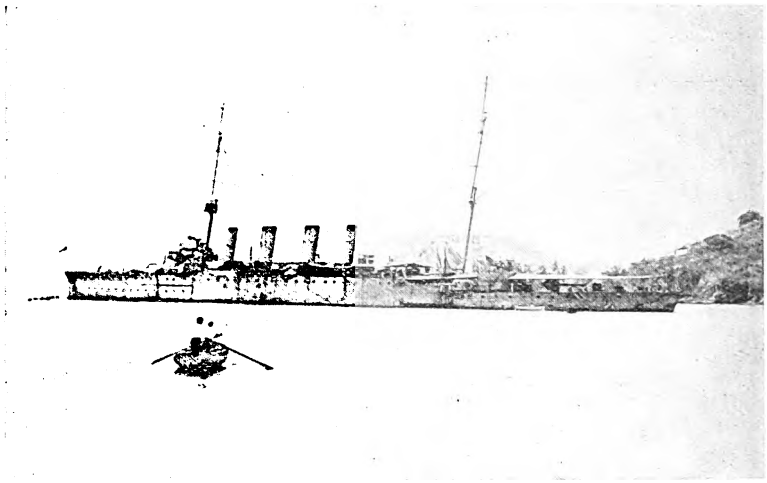
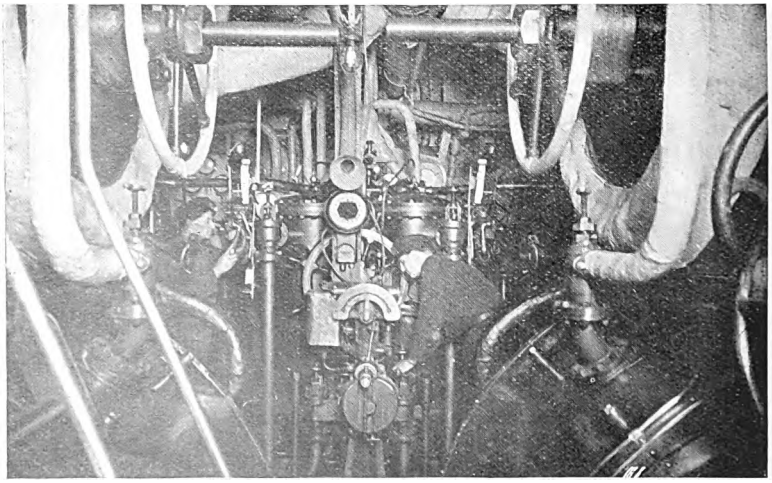


H.M.A.S. *Melbourne* AT MARTINIQUE, 1915

Lent by Able Seaman L. B. Eklert, R.A.N.
Aust. War Memorial Collection No. EN112.



PART OF THE ENGINE ROOM IN H.M.A.S. *Sydney*

Aust. War Memorial Official Photo. No. EN169.

To face p. **247.**

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me to meet him at rendezvous at 10 a.m. next morning. Proceeded to bay north of Marmora Island, and rested on bottom for night.

"On April 30 at daylight refitted exhaust-tank valve and proceeded to rendezvous. Arrived at 10 a.m. and sighted torpedo-boat approaching from westward. Dived to avoid torpedo-boat; whilst diving, sighted smoke in Artaki Bay, so steered south to investigate. About 10.30 boat's nose suddenly rose, and boat broke surface about a mile from torpedo-boat. Blew water forward, but could not get boat to dive. Torpedo-boat, firing, got very close, and ship from Artaki Bay, a gunboat, was also firing at range of about three miles; flooded a forward tank, and boat suddenly took big inclination down by bows, and dived rapidly. *AE 2* was only fitted with 100-foot depth-gauges. This depth was quickly reached and passed. Went full speed astern, and commenced to blow main ballast. After a considerable interval the boat rose rapidly, passed the 100-foot mark, and, in spite of efforts to check her, broke surface stern first. Within a few seconds the engine-room was hit, and holed in three places. Owing to the great inclination down by the bow, it was impossible to see the torpedo-boat through the periscope, and I considered that any attempt to ram her would be useless. I therefore blew main ballast and ordered all hands on deck. Assisted by Lieutenant Haggard,[8] I then opened the tanks to flood and went on deck. The boat sank in a few minutes in about 55 fathoms, in approximate position 4′ north of Kara Burnu Point, at about 10.45 a.m. All hands were picked up by the torpedo-boat, and no lives were lost.

"I have no explanation to offer of the original loss of trim of the boat. That many leaks had been caused by the final bump, when aground in the Narrows, did not in my opinion satisfactorily explain the sudden rise of the bows. I believe an identically similar case occurred in the first year of the war to submarine *E 11*, Lieutenant-Commander Nasmith,[9] when, in the presence of enemy destroyers, the boat suddenly rose by the bows, and all tanks had to be flooded to

[8] Lieut.-Commr. G. A. G. Haggard, D.S.C.; R.N. Of Norfolk, Eng.; b. London, 4 May, 1888.

[9] Vice-Admiral M. E. Dunbar-Nasmith, V.C., C.B.; R.N. Commanded R.N. College, Dartmouth, 1926/28; C.-in-C. East Indies Station, 1932. B. 1 April, 1883.

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sink her to the bottom, as she was fortunately in shallow water. On return to harbour she was docked for examination, but no reason for the extraordinary behaviour was found.

"Finally, I have to bring to your favourable notice the behaviour of the crew throughout all the service herein specified. The manner in which they performed their duties was such as to earn the most complete recommendation that I can possibly give them."[10]

III

It has already been stated that the two light cruisers *Melbourne* and *Sydney* were in November, 1914, detached from the escort of the First Convoy and sent to hunt for German raiding cruisers in the Atlantic Ocean. Their story must now be told in greater detail.

The destruction of the *Emden,* the imprisonment of the *Königsberg,* and the knowledge that von Spee was on the South American coast and probably making for Magellan Strait, induced the Admiralty on the 10th of November to suggest that the light cruisers should be used in the Atlantic: the Pacific and Indian Oceans, they considered, were "clear of all description of enemy ships." The Board was not quite so sure. The *Cormoran* was still unaccounted for; German merchant-vessels were in plenty in Dutch ports, and, if quietly armed, might inflict much damage, especially as the Second Convoy was due to leave Australia before the end of the year. Nor was von Spee's destination certain; if pressed by a superior British force on the Chilean coast, he might yet break back into the mid-Pacific area. It was thought advisable to remind the Admiralty of these facts, adding:

> Government appreciates need for fast vessels in Atlantic, and are aware that quite sufficient British force remains in Far East. Government would be glad if Admiralty will inform them of future disposition of this force to meet situation.

The tone of this message betrays the effect produced on the Australian authorities by the tasks assigned earlier in the war to the China Squadron.[11]

[10] Turkish accounts state that *AE 2* was sunk by the torpedo-boat *Sultan Hissar* between Marmora and Kara Bigh after a two hours' engagement.

[11] *See pp. 18-19.*

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The response was immediate and adequate:

> It is necessary to profit instantly and to the full by the destruction of *Emden* and the blocking of *Königsberg*, so as to combine every effort against *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*. Admiralty therefore propose to move *Melbourne* and *Sydney* into Atlantic with other British fast cruisers, and simultaneously search the Pacific shores of South America with an Anglo-Japanese squadron under H.M.S. *Australia*. Sufficient British ships are left for convoy duties in Pacific and Indian Oceans, and Japanese fleet is also there. If any German warships should return to Australasian waters, suitable reinforcements will be sent immediately. Admiralty feel sure Commonwealth will wish that military considerations should rule, and that boldest and most vigorous use should be made of these valuable ships.

As the Commonwealth Government had from the first wished that military considerations should rule, this assurance was welcome, and the Admiralty's proposals were at once agreed to.

When Admiral Sturdee had destroyed von Spee's squadron off the Falklands, four German cruisers were still unaccounted for. The *Dresden* had escaped from the disaster, and by the 19th of December was known to have run back into the Pacific. The *Karlsruhe* (a light cruiser of 4,820 tons, carrying twelve 4.1-inch guns), which had during three months of commerce-raiding in the Atlantic taken or sunk sixteen British merchant-vessels, was believed to be cruising on the trade-route to South American ports, or perhaps nearer the Caribbean Sea; she had last been heard of off the coast of northern Brazil on the 26th of October. The *Prinz Eitel Friedrich* had been left in Pacific waters when von Spee made his dash eastwards, and, as far as the Admiralty's information went, was still there. The *Kron-Prinz Wilhelm* (an auxiliary cruiser mounting two 3.4-inch guns) was active along the South American trade-routes below the equator. It was a matter of extreme urgency that the two raiders at large in the Atlantic should be hunted down, and the *Melbourne* and *Sydney* were at the end of 1914 ordered to join in the hunt.

The Admiralty's first plan, formed immediately after the Falklands fight, was to reconstitute the Australian Squadron and give it charge of West Indian waters, the *Australia* passing through the Panama Canal and being joined at Jamaica by the two light cruisers. But, at the moment, the canal was closed to heavy traffic; the *Australia*, as we have seen, had to make the long voyage round South America; and the light cruisers could not be kept idle so long. The

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Melbourne was therefore despatched from Gibraltar early in December, reached Bermuda on the 20th, and was set to patrol the entrances to the Caribbean. The West Indies and North America Stations had been made separate commands, and on the 10th of February Captain Silver became senior officer in the West Indies, pending the arrival of Admiral Patey. The *Melbourne* (alternating with the *Condé*) maintained a watch on the German steamer *Bavaria,* lying in Havana, until the 22nd of March, when the *Kron-Prinz Wilhelm's* collier *Odenwald* tried to escape from San Juan in Puerto Rico and the *Melbourne* was sent thither to blockade her. The *Sydney,* which reached Bermuda on the 6th of January, 1915, was at first set to the same work. When, however, intelligence was received which indicated the existence of a German rendezvous off Cape St. Roque in Brazil, she was despatched hot-foot to that spot to meet Admiral Stoddart,[12] who was in charge of the South Atlantic and Pacific Station and had just returned from an ineffective chase of the *Dresden.* Curiously enough, while the rumour was untrue, both the *Prinz Eitel Friedrich* (which had left the Pacific on the 12th of January and had sunk eight allied vessels in the South Atlantic) and the *Kron-Prinz Wilhelm* (which had been even more successful, securing two colliers, besides other prizes) were at the moment near the supposed rendezvous, the former making hastily northwards to take refuge in some United States port, the latter coaling at her leisure in open ocean from one of the prizes. After waiting four days at Lavandeira Reef (near Cape St. Roque), the *Sydney* on the 26th of February swept east together with the *Edinburgh Castle* and two colliers, and they might have met the *Kron-Prinz Wilhelm* had they not been suddenly turned south through a misleading report. But they sighted no enemy. The full story of the episode, during which the *Australia* and the *Canopus* and half-a-dozen more British warships were at one time or another almost within sight of the raiders, demonstrates conclusively how difficult it is, even with all the odds in favour, to hunt any single vessel at sea.

[12] Admiral A. P. Stoddart, C.B.; R.N. Of Broomhill, Stratton, North Cornwall, Eng.; b. Castle Douglas, Kirkcudbrightshire, Scotland, 5 Sept., 1860.

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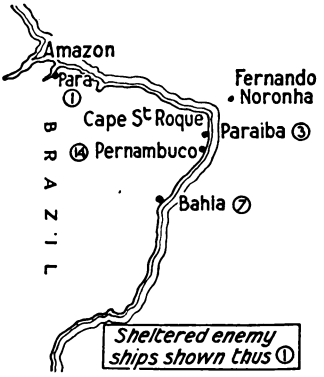
Admiral Stoddart did not appear at the rendezvous, his ship (the *Carnarvon*) having struck an uncharted rock. The *Sydney,* therefore, diverged towards Fernando Noronha, found nothing, and went on southwards to join Stoddart, who promptly made her his flagship and began a fresh hunt for the *Kron-Prinz Wilhelm.* While the rest of his squadron scoured the ocean along the equator, the *Sydney* investigated the Brazilian coast, and poked her nose into several likely hiding-places in the neighbourhood of the Amazon estuary.



The *Australia,* meanwhile, had reached England and was placed at the Admiralty's disposal for service in the North Sea. A new distribution of forces now came into effect. The battle-cruisers were reorganised as a self-contained "fleet," and the *Australia* was made flagship of the Second Battle Cruiser Squadron, with the *New Zealand* and *Indefatigable* as her mates; but, Admiral Patey being officially senior to Sir David Beatty, an Order in Council confirmed the latter in acting seniority "for the purpose of command while employed afloat during hostilities." Apparently this formal action was not altogether satisfactory; before Admiral Patey actually reached Rosyth to take up his new command, the Admiralty was proposing to the Australian Government that he should be transferred to the command of a "North American and West Indies Cruiser Squadron," which would include the *Melbourne* and *Sydney.* Accordingly on the 7th of March Admiral Pakenham[18] hoisted his flag in the *Australia* in command of the Second Battle Cruiser Squadron; and Admiral Patey on the 10th hoisted his in the *Leviathan,* and sailed next day for Bermuda, which was not reached until the 26th. The North America and West Indies Stations were reunited before his arrival.

[18] Admiral Sir W. C. Pakenham, G.C.B., K.C.M.G., K.C.V.O.; R.N. Commanded Second Battle Cruiser Sqdn., 1915/17; Battle Cruiser Fleet, 1917/19. Of London: b. London, 10 July, 1861. Died 28 July, 1933.

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The force on that station at this time consisted of—

R.N.—

Leviathan, cruiser, "Drake" class, 14,100 tons (sister to the *Good Hope*).

Glory, battleship, "Canopus" class, 12,950 tons.

Berwick, *Suffolk*, *Cumberland* } cruisers, "county" class, 9,800 tons.

Caronia, *Calgarian* } auxiliary cruisers.

R.A.N.—

Melbourne, *Sydney*[14] } light cruisers, 5,400 tons.

R.C.N.—

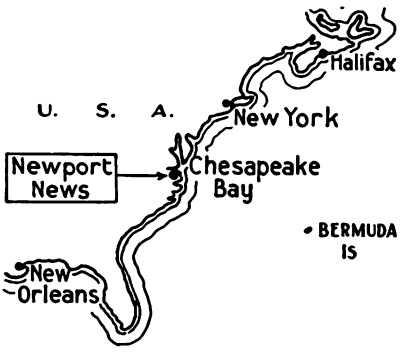
Niobe, protected cruiser, "Diadem" class, 11,000 tons (belonging to the Canadian Government).

French Navy—

Condé, armoured cruiser, 10,000 tons.

Descartes, protected cruiser, about 4,000 tons.

—a sufficiently composite force, larger than, but not otherwise unlike, the squadron which met von Spee off the coast of Chile. Of these the first three were at Bermuda; the *Niobe* and *Caronia* were cruising off New York, and the *Suffolk, Cumberland,* and *Calgarian* off the Chesapeake; the *Sydney* was away with Stoddart and the rest were in the West Indies.



The immediately important feature of the situation was that the *Prinz Eitel Friedrich* had on the 10th of

[14] Temporarily detached to the South American Squadron.

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March taken refuge in the United States port of Newport News. The law of nations gave her a right to seek neutral territory for necessary repairs; but she had also been allowed to get her bottom cleaned and coated, thus increasing her speed and rendering her more efficient to catch British merchant vessels (her captain declared that he had thus gained four knots in speed). Admiral Patey's first action on reaching his station was to protest against this. The American authorities, however, held that under article 17 of the Hague Convention of 1907 it was permissible to repair damages not suffered in a fight but caused by a long stay at sea. It was, therefore, Patey's duty to keep watch off the Chesapeake Bay so as to pounce on the *Prinz Eitel Friedrich* as soon as she passed the three-mile limit outward; and the early days (and nights) of April were a very anxious time. In the morning of the 8th, however, it was ascertained that the *Prinz Eitel Friedrich* had been interned.

The *Dresden* had already (on the 14th of March) been destroyed at Juan Fernandez in the southern Pacific, and about the same time it was ascertained that the *Karlsruhe* had been blown up accidentally on the 4th of November, 1914, while on her way to raid Barbados. Only the *Kron-Prinz Wilhelm*, therefore, was still unaccounted for. She had last been heard of on the 28th of March in lat. 2° 14′ S., long. 27° 19′ W.—*i.e.*, about 1,300 miles east of the mouth of the Amazon. Admiral Stoddart in the *Sydney* and the whole of his squadron were searching for her off the South American coast, but it was a hopeless task to hunt her down in the open. She had then, however, been at sea so long that she would soon have to seek port for repairs; and, as few neutral ports outside the United States had the necessary facilities, and Newport News was being watched, it was expected that she would make for New Orleans. To intercept her, should she try to reach it through the Caribbean, the *Melbourne* was on April 8th ordered to patrol the passage between Grenada and Trinidad; but before this work could be taken up the missing raider unexpectedly slipped into Hampton Roads (close to Newport News) during the night of April 10th, and the *Melbourne* was hastily brought up to Bermuda and sent off to take her turn at guarding the mouth of Chesapeake Bay.

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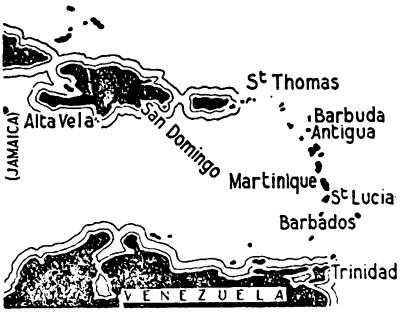
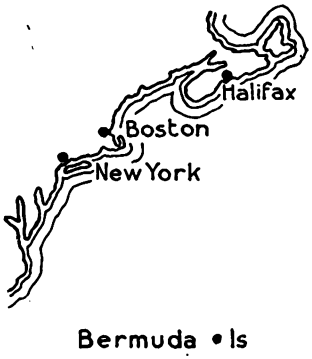
To replace her on the West Indies patrol the *Sydney* was recalled from South American waters, and reached St. Lucia on the 25th. On the 27th, after another anxious interval, Patey learnt that the *Kron-Prinz Wilhelm* was to be interned, and the last enemy warship in the Atlantic was thus rendered innocuous.



The duties of the North American and West Indies Squadron from this time onwards consisted chiefly of (*a*) watching neutral ports—New York in particular—to prevent the escape of German vessels which had taken refuge there, (*b*) patrolling the waterways which led to Canadian ports, in case the latest German submarines should attempt to attack vessels using them. The squadron also on occasion supplied escorts for Canadian troopships, but only once was an Australian ship employed in that way. The only other danger to be guarded against was a possible breakaway in force of German light cruisers from German waters, but the measures planned to deal with this eventuality were never actually needed.

For the following sixteen months, therefore, the *Melbourne* and *Sydney* were attached to a series of patrols (*a*) in the West Indies, with Jamaica as centre and resting-base, and (*b*) off Long Island and the mouth of New York harbour, with Halifax as resting-base. The squadron's headquarters were at Bermuda, where the ships called when changing stations or for their half-yearly docking. For some reason, however, the *Sydney* was given only one turn on the New York patrol, while the



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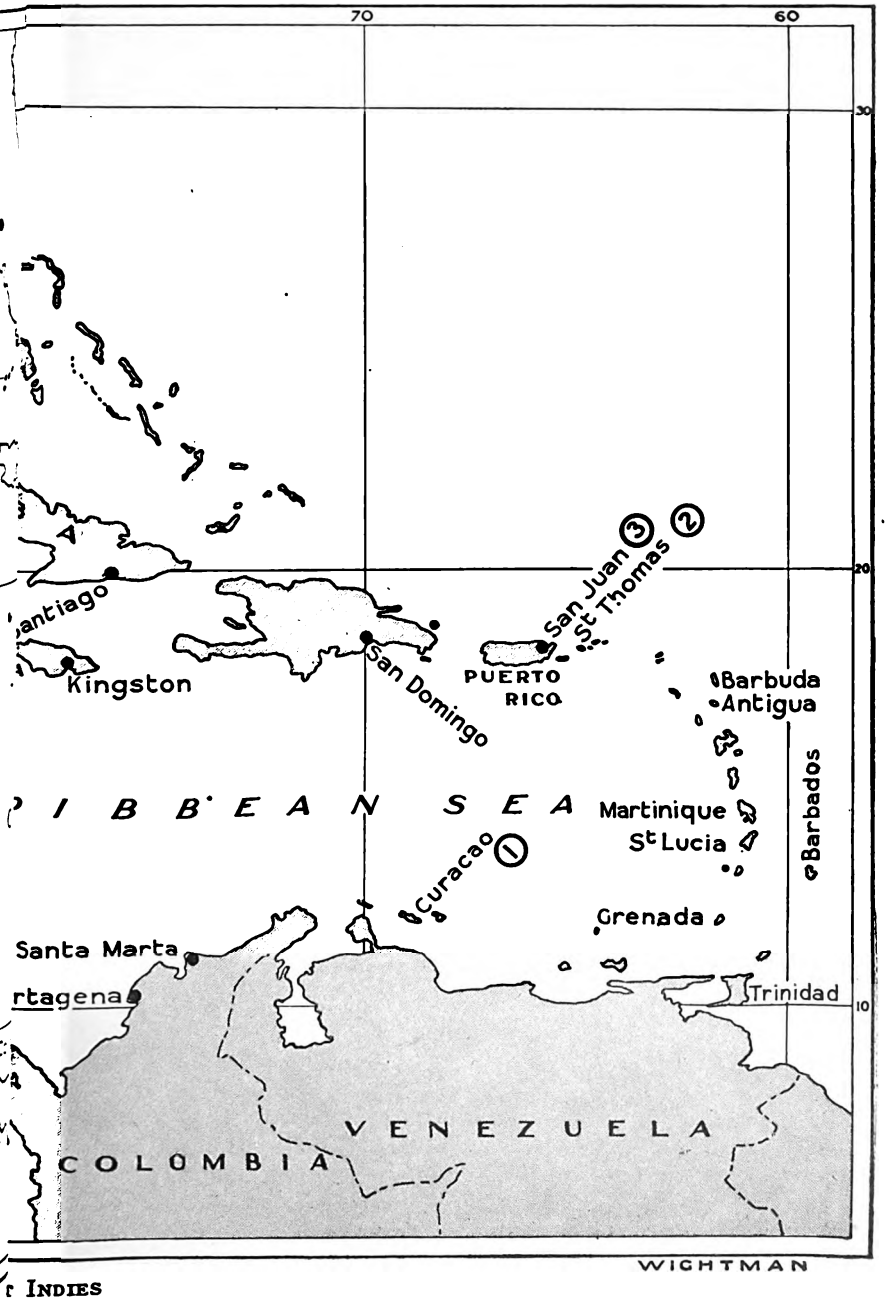

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my vessels sheltering in neutral ports.

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Melbourne had two. This patrol work may be illustrated by a calendar showing the movements of the two ships for August and September, 1915:—

		Melbourne.	*Sydney.*
Aug.	3.	Left St. Lucia.	
	4.	Arrive Barbados.	
	7.		Left Bermuda.
	9.		Arrive New York patrol.
	11.	Left Barbados.	
	12.	Arrive Trinidad.	
	18.		Left patrol for Halifax.
	19.	Left Trindad.	
	20.	Arrive Barbados.	Arrive Halifax.
	24.	Left Barbados.	
	25.	Arrive Martinique.	Left Halifax.
	26.	Arrive Antigua.	
	27.	Arrive Barbuda.	Arrive on patrol.
	29.	Arrive Antigua.	
	30.	Arrive St. Lucia.	
Sept.	1.	Arrive Barbados.	
	5.	Left Barbados.	Left patrol for Halifax.
	7.		Arrive Halifax.
	9.	Arrive Jamaica.	
	12.	Left for Bermuda.	Left Halifax for patrol.
	14.		Arrive on patrol.
	18.	Inspected Alta Vela, San Domingo, and St. Thomas.	Left for Halifax.
	19.	Arrive Bermuda.	Arrive Halifax.
	27.		Left Halifax for Jamaica.
	29.	Arrive on New York patrol.	
Oct.	4.		Arrive Jamaica.

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One result of this northern patrol service is worth detailing. The visits of the *Sydney* to Halifax during August and September made a deep impression on Canadians, and both Quebec and Halifax newspapers spoke warmly of the value of the Australian Squadron. "We in Halifax," wrote the *Chronicle* of that city, "have special reason for congratulating our sister Dominion upon the fine service rendered by her fleet"; the *Acadian Recorder* was of the same opinion; a Quebec journal quoted by the latter was even more emphatic:—

> His Majesty's Australian ship *Sydney* is now, and for some time has been, forming a part of the naval protection that the Canadian coast required during the war. . . . To-day Canada is accepting the service of the Australian cruiser to guard our soldiers as they travel to Bermuda, and to protect our coasts and to look after shipping out and in, and guard against possible submarine attack by the enemy. . .
>
> If Canada had possessed a few smart cruisers like this one from Australia, which is now making up for our deficiencies in this respect, their value would have been above price. The *Karlsruhe* might have been disposed of a year ago while in the North Atlantic, and all the mischief she worked afterwards prevented.

It was either good luck or fine tact that thus set the warships of one Dominion to guard and aid a sister Dominion.

While patrol work in the North Atlantic was not so monotonous—nor for the crews so seemingly meaningless—as the destroyers' endless cruising in the tropical waters of Malaysia, it had its own difficulties and embarrassments. In the West Indies the task was comparatively simple; almost all the islands to be visited belonged to one or another Ally; the few exceptions—St. Thomas, San Domingo, etc.—had only minor harbours in which a few small German merchantmen had taken shelter, and it was easy to make sure that they did not escape; along the Central American mainland there was little danger of enemy action. The task of ships on the northern patrol was far more arduous. The actual cruising in open ocean was a greater strain on officers and men alike, and the port which especially must be watched was of far greater importance than all those in the West Indies put together. Out of ninety-one enemy vessels which had taken refuge in North Atlantic ports between Cartagena in Colombia and Boston in Massachusetts, thirty-two were in New York harbour—but these included the great *Vaterland*

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of 54,000 tons, and nine others of more than 10,000 tons each. Taking all the neutral ports in the area just specified, a rough estimate shows that the West Indies patrol had to guard against the escape of thirty-eight enemy vessels, totalling 141,000 tons, whereas the northern patrol had to watch fifty-three vessels totalling over 465,000 tons, of which at least sixteen would be of great use as auxiliary cruisers if Germany could get them safely out of port and surreptitiously armed.

A further strain was imposed both on Admiral Patey and on the northern ships by the temperament of the neutral Power in whose ports the enemy vessels were sheltering. The Government of the United States was in those days strictly neutral, endeavouring to perform its duties in that respect with perfect impartiality. But the nation behind the Government was by no means unanimous in supporting it. Its sympathies were divided, and that part which sided with Germany did its best by intrigue and misrepresentation to create friction between Britain and the United States.[15] For quite as large a section, in spite of their wish to remain neutral, it was unpleasant to feel that British cruisers were patrolling off their coast and occasionally (as was their right by the laws of war) detaining and inspecting American vessels. Among officials on both sides every effort was made to avoid mutual irritation; when in May, 1915, the United States navy held its annual manœuvres outside New York, the British cruisers were withdrawn far out to sea, and the New York authorities on their side made it practically impossible for any German vessel to make the slightest movement towards escape. But German sympathisers were indefatigable in their intrigues. They spread rumours and made public complaints that British cruisers were infringing the rule of the three-mile limit. One neutral vessel, they declared, had "taken refuge in Norfolk" (Chesapeake Bay) from the "pursuit" of a British ship; in actual fact Norfolk was the port for which she was bound all along, and no British ship had

[15] The *Sydney* noted that the captains of one American line—and one only—constantly appeared anxious to foment trouble between the United States and Great Britain. The line in question was a newly formed one.

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approached the three-mile limit within which she was proceeding, or had attempted to meddle with her in any way. Another story told how a British cruiser had actually entered and steamed up Chesapeake Bay, and, when challenged, had admitted her identity. It is easy to imagine the hostile feelings that might have been aroused against Britain throughout the States had any of these stories—there were plenty more—been in the slightest degree true, or even not provably a lie. The fact that such a feeling was confined within very narrow limits, and did not at all affect either the United States Government or the more influential press, is a striking testimony to the vigilance of Admiral Patey and the scrupulously correct conduct of his cruiser-commanders.

In June, 1915, it became known that Germany posssesed submarines with an exceptionally large radius of action, and might think of employing them to cross the Atlantic and attack either the British patrols or British merchant-vessels trading with United States ports. Ships on patrol were therefore ordered to keep well out to sea, zigzag considerably, and avoid covering the same ground twice except at wide intervals. Irregularity of movement was above all to be aimed at.

We may thus form a fairly accurate picture of the doings of the two Australian cruisers during their twenty months in the North Atlantic. Their normal work, if on the northern patrol, was to spend nine or ten days zigzagging up and down between Long Island and New Jersey, about seventy miles from the mouth of New York harbour—no pleasant task in the summer fogs or autumn gales—and five or six days resting and refitting at Halifax. On the southern patrol both the rests at Jamaica (usually a fortnight or three weeks) and the periods at sea (three to six weeks) were longer, but the work was far less monotonous; the ships sailed warm tropical seas, hovering off neutral ports—St. Thomas, Curaçoa, Cartagena. Tampico—to ascertain the continued presence of German refugee vessels; calling at British or French islands—Antigua, Martinique, Barbados, Trinidad—to pick up news

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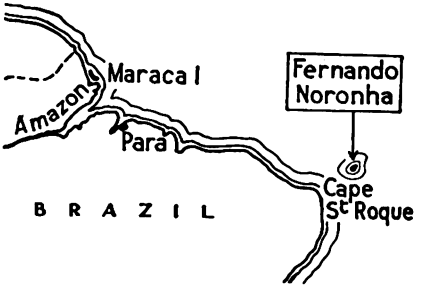
and cheer the inhabitants; or showing the flag along the coasts of the Gulf of Mexico to warn enemy plotters that the export of contraband would be dangerous.

Occasionally they were detached on special duty. Thus the *Sydney* in November, 1915, was sent hot-foot to Progreso in Yucatan to watch a vessel (the *Zealandia*) nominally under the United States flag but with a German captain and crew, which was suspected of attempting to carry contraband cargo for Germany's use. The *Zealandia's* cargo (whatever it was) having been discharged ashore, the *Sydney* was sent to Belize, and then for a tour of the Gulf coasts, and as soon as she reached Jamaica again the *Melbourne* took her place in the Gulf. The *Melbourne,* for her part, distinguished herself on the New York patrol by capturing a German-owned but nominally Dutch steamer, the *Hamborn,* which she took to Halifax and handed over to the authorities of the prize court at that place. In February, 1916, the presence of a German raider (the *Pungo*) in the Atlantic having been ascertained, the *Melbourne* was sent to search the north coast of Brazil for possible enemy bases; she inspected Maraca Island on the 26th of February, visited Para on the 2nd of March, and was pursuing her researches farther east when on the 7th news came that the *Pungo* was back in Germany. The *Melbourne* was at once recalled and set to patrol the area between St. Lucia and Venezuela, with her base at St. Lucia, while the *Sydney* was at work west of Jamaica with her base



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at Kingston. In May the *Sydney* was called up to Bermuda to escort a Canadian transport, the *Magdalena,* towards Europe; she took charge on the 20th, handed the troopship over to another cruiser somewhere in the Atlantic on the 26th, and was back at Bermuda by the 1st of June. Meanwhile the *Melbourne* had been brought north towards Jamaica and, passing San Domingo, found that a revolution was toward; as the United States on the 13th of May sent a warship to control the situation, Patey decided that British ships were better away. The *Melbourne* then took over the *Sydney's* old beat in the Gulf, and the latter, when she returned from escort duty, proceeded in July to the St. Lucia patrol, being placed for the time under Rear-Admiral E. J. I. Aubry of the French Navy, who was made senior officer in the West Indies. On the 9th of July a new situation was created by the arrival of the German submarine *Deutschland* in Chesapeake Bay, but neither of the Australian cruisers was affected; the *Melbourne* spent July and August refitting at Bermuda, while the *Sydney* was, as aforesaid, south of St. Lucia, and for part of the time scouting off the coasts of Venezuela and Brazil.

In June, however, the Admiralty had reconsidered the whole situation in the Atlantic. Germany, it was felt, had lost too many fast light cruisers to be able to spare any for a desperate attempt at raiding Atlantic trade-routes; and it was because of their speed, and their consequent usefulness in hunting down such fast raiders, that the *Melbourne* and *Sydney* had in the first place been attached to the North Atlantic Squadron. On the 29th of June, therefore, it was suggested to the Commonwealth Government that the two Australian cruisers should be withdrawn from the West Indies and absorbed in the Grand Fleet, " where they would be more suitably and usefully employed . . . and would have opportunity of taking part in more important naval events." Technically, of course, no such suggestion need have been made, since all the Australian ships had been handed over to direct Admiralty control. But this episode is an excellent instance of the practice referred to in Chapter I,[16] and of the manner in which a little tact and courtesy eliminated a great

[16] *See p. 8.*

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H.M.A.S. *Australia* PASSING UNDER THE FORTH BRIDGE

British Official Photograph.
Aust. War Memorial Collection No. EN540.

To face p. 260.

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A LOWER-DECK MESS, H.M.A.S. *Australia*.

British Official Photograph.
Aust. War Memorial Collection No. EN500.

To face p. 261.

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deal of possible friction between the various authorities which, in one way or another, had to do with Australian warships.

The Australian authorities, of course, assented at once. The consequent re-arrangements in the North Atlantic were considerable. The French cruisers attached to the squadron were replaced by a stronger French division. The *Melbourne*, when her refit was complete, left Bermuda for Devonport on the 28th of August; the *Sydney*, recalled from the southern patrol, reached Jamaica on that day, Bermuda on the 4th of September, and on the 9th left for Plymouth. Admiral Patey on the 14th of August shifted his flag from H.M.S. *Leviathan* to H.M.S. *Drake;* the *Leviathan* proceeded hurriedly to England, embarked a new commanding officer for the squadron, Vice-Admiral Browning,[17] and brought him back to Halifax; there on the 13th of September Admiral Patey handed over command of the station, and sailed the same day in the *Drake* for England. And thus Australian service in the North Atlantic came to an end.

[17] Admiral Sir M. E. Browning, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., M.V.O.; R.N. C.-in-C. North America and West Indies Stn., 1916/17. Commanded 4th Battle Squadron, 1918. Of Crawley, Winchester, Eng.; b. Fornham, St. Martin, Suffolk, Eng., 18 Jan., 1863.

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CHAPTER X

SERVICE IN EUROPEAN WATERS

AMONG the little ironies that have beset the life of the Australian Navy, it may be noted that the ship which made most use of its guns during the war was the little *Pioneer,* while the 19,000-ton flagship of the Squadron, the *Australia,* never saw a battle or fired a gun in action.[1] Notwithstanding this, her services to the Commonwealth were of inestimable value in the Pacific; and her work at the other side of the world, if it was less indispensable, and from the spectacular point of view even more uneventful, must nevertheless be taken into account as the major part of Australia's contribution to the defence of the Empire at its most critical moments and in its most vulnerable spot.

We have already seen that it was the Admiralty's original intention to use her, at the conclusion of her work in the Pacific, as Admiral Patey's flagship in the West Indies. "The victory off the Falklands"—thus ran a message of the 12th of December, 1914—"enables us to confine the enemy to European and North Atlantic waters," and the *Australia, Melbourne,* and *Sydney* would in the West Indies be well posted to deal with attempts of German cruisers to break out of the North Sea. The battle-cruisers *Invincible* and *Inflexible* had been recalled to home waters, and the hunting down of light cruisers seemed to Australians a rather trivial task for their own battle-cruiser, but the Admiralty's decision was, as always, ungrudgingly accepted. With the new year, however, there came better news. The battle-cruiser fight of the 24th of January, 1915, in the North Sea induced the Admiralty to reorganise its ships of that class, and on the 27th the Naval Board was informed that it was proposed to make the *Australia* the flagship of a new battle-cruiser squadron (including the *New Zealand*) for service in British waters. The *Australia,* it was added, "can

[1] This appears to be literally true, unless the shots fired to stop—and, afterwards, to sink—the *Eleonore Woermann,* and a shot fired on the 30th December, 1917, at a suspected submarine, come within the category of "firing in action."

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be readily detached if the situation changes and any attempt is made by the enemy to break out into the Atlantic. Pray let us know your views." They were made known at once:

Commonwealth Government cordially concur, having only in view effective distribution to meet requirements of naval situation.

The new arrangements have already been noted,[2] but may for convenience be repeated here as the Admiralty described them.

Your action in placing *Australia* at our disposal for temporary service in the North Sea enables the battle-cruiser fleet to be constituted as follows. Fleet flagship, *Lion;* First Battle Cruiser Squadron, *Tiger, Princess Royal, Queen Mary;* Second Battle Cruiser Squadron, *Australia, New Zealand, Indefatigable;* Third Battle Cruiser Squadron, *Indomitable, Inflexible, Invincible.* This is a splendid organisation. . . . We should like, if you concur, to appoint Admiral Pakenham, well-known in Japanese War, to hoist his flag in *Australia* as flagship of the Second Battle Cruiser Squadron while she is in the North Sea.[3]

The *Australia* herself reached Plymouth on the 28th of January, 1915, docked at Devonport, left again on the 12th of February, and reached Rosyth (the headquarters of the battle-cruiser squadrons) on the 17th by a route which took

[2] *See p. 251.*

[3] It will be convenient to state here the various changes in the command of the Australian Squadron during the war. The commanding admiral had the *Australia* as his flagship, except during the eighteen months from March 1915 to September 1916, and when (as will be seen later) the *Australia* was temporarily disabled and in dock.

1915.

8 February. Sir George Patey, Vice-Admiral Commanding Second Battle Cruiser Squadron.

7 March. Sir George Patey, Vice-Admiral Commanding-in-Chief, North America and West Indies; flagship, H.M.S. *Leviathan.* (Succeeded by Rear-Admiral W. C. Pakenham in the *Australia* as commander of the Second Battle Cruiser Squadron, but *not* of the Australian Fleet.)

1916.

23 September. W. C. Pakenham, Rear-Admiral Commanding Second Battle Cruiser Squadron. (Rear-Admiral Pakenham was this day appointed to the command of the Australian Fleet, the *Melbourne* and *Sydney* being transferred to the Second Light Cruiser Squadron, of which he was in administrative command. On 27 November Pakenham was appointed to the command of the battle-cruiser force, and was directed to retain the *Australia* as his flagship. On his pointing out that the *Lion* was a more suitable ship, he was allowed to transfer to her.)

1917.

10 January. A. C. Leveson, Rear-Admiral Commanding Second Battle Cruiser Squadron (in succession to Rear-Admiral Pakenham).

1918.

4 September. Lionel Halsey, Rear-Admiral Commanding Second Battle Cruiser Squadron (in succession to Rear-Admiral Leveson).

1919.

22 March. J. S. Dumaresq, Commodore in command of His Majesty's Australian Fleet.

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her through a heavy gale right round Ireland and the Shetlands. At Rosyth she refitted and then took her place in the Battle Cruiser Fleet. From the middle of February, that is, she was merely one of a number of warships under Admiralty orders, and Australia knew no more of her, officially, until the war was over. Even the records which became available in Australia at the end of the war divulged nothing beyond the bare outline of the new routine into which she plunged—

7	March.	Proceeded with squadron to eastward.
8	„	Carried out firing practices.
9	„	Carried out fleet exercises.
10	„	Returned to Rosyth.
21	„	Vice-Admiral Beatty inspected ship's company.
29	„	Proceeded with squadron to south-east.
30	„	Returned to Rosyth.
5	April.	Proceeded with squadron.
6	„	Carried out firing practices.
7	„	Carried out fleet exercises.
8	„	Returned to Rosyth.
11	„	Proceeded with squadron.
13	„	Carried out exercises with Scapa force.
15	„	Returned to Rosyth.

Even this much, of course, was not known in Australia at the time; but, by the courtesy of the Admiralty, there have recently been made available sufficient data to render possible some understanding of the operations—at least up to the middle of 1916—of the British force of which she was now a unit. The principles on which British strategy in the North Sea was based have been very differently interpreted by different experts—even by those with intimate knowledge of the events. For example, the Russian Commodore G. von Schoultz, who for four years was naval attaché to the Grand Fleet, and shared in most of its exploits, including the Battle of Jutland, afterwards gave expression to the following views:[4]

> The strategy of the Admiralty in the main theatre of war, the North Sea, was marked by extreme passivity. To all appearances the main task of the Grand Fleet was, not the destruction of the enemy naval forces, but the protection of England against a German

[4] See *With the British Battle Fleet, pp. 163-4.*

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invasion. . . . As far as the High Sea Fleet was concerned, with its bases in the Heligoland Bight, the Admiralty decided to confine themselves to the so-called distant blockade. . . . The strategy of the British Admiralty was also influenced by factors of a purely tactical nature, which in part were new to naval warfare and therefore exerted a particularly powerful influence upon the imagination. The chief of these factors was the submarine, which made any operations in the proximity of the enemy coast much more difficult, and also apparently put a close blockade out of the question.

However that may be, the Admiralty distributed the Fleet in accordance with the demands of a distant blockade, moved the chief base to Scapa Flow, and so exposed the English coast to enemy attack. To avoid leaving the coast completely unprotected, the battle-cruisers were detached from the Battle Fleet, and they were based at Rosyth. . . . This splitting of the main force into two parts offered to the enemy the possibility of undertaking operations against each part separately, but at the same time challenged him to large-scale enterprises in the open sea. The attacks by German cruisers on the English coast in the autumn and winter of the first year of the war were a direct consequence of the division of the British Fleet. . . . I assume that this distribution of the British Fleet was effected, not only with a view to defence, but also in order to entice the enemy fleet to make attacks on the British coast, and so give the Grand Fleet an opportunity to surprise them on the return journey and bring them to action in the open sea. . . . Admiral Jellicoe does not admit that these incidental circumstances played a decisive rôle in the handling of the question of dividing the Grand Fleet. It is true, however, that every attack by German cruisers, and even destroyers, against the East Coast of England brought out, not only Admiral Beatty's Battle Cruiser Fleet but also the British Battle Fleet from its bases in the North of Scotland.

More accurate in some respects are probably the opinions —expressed early in 1915—by a high naval officer then serving with the Grand Fleet. He, writing solely for his fellow-officers, declared that the main objects of the fleet's distribution were

(*a*) to maintain unimpaired the full command of the outer seas;

(*b*) to muster overwhelming force in the decisive area;

(*c*) to exert against the enemy by use of sea-power a maximum of economic and military pressure.

"It must be admitted," he added, "that we are not in a position to stop with certainty a dash across the North Sea for the purpose of bombarding undefended towns and slaughtering civilians. That . . . might happen as many as three or four times, but the more often it is repeated the more certain it becomes that the final ending of such strategy will be entirely in our favour. . . . We already possess

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everything that sea-power can give, we have achieved everything that naval force can achieve; our fleets are holding constantly the maritime gateways of the outer world, and if the Germans wish to take from us what we hold they must come out and storm these gateways." He goes on to maintain that the military axiom, "Success in war can be attained only by the defeat of the enemy's mobile forces," does not apply with similar force to naval warfare. "If the German Fleet comes out and is defeated in battle, it becomes physically impossible for them to command the sea, and success is ours. If they prefer to stay in harbour and abandon all the maritime highways, they accept a moral defeat which is just as valuable to us. It is therefore in no way necessary for us to meet and fight them unless they actively challenge our command of the sea."

While only the Admiralty can authoritatively pronounce upon this matter, it is possible to draw from the published volumes of the British official history, supplemented by other reliable data, two positive inferences: first, that in planning its periodical sorties, the direct or indirect object of each fleet was to entice the opposing forces to come out in circumstances favourable to itself—the Germans endeavouring to avoid action with the main British fleet but to overpower weak detachments and draw the main fleet into submarine traps or mine-fields; the British hoping to cut off the High Sea Fleet from its harbours and bring it to action, but in an area devoid of traps. The second inference is that an operation even by the lightest forces tended to involve the stronger ones which emerged in support, and so might at any time quickly precipitate an action between the main fleets; for even the German airship raids on England were, after the loss of the Zeppelin *L 19* in the North Sea, supported by destroyers and light cruisers, which themselves had to be supported by battle-cruisers, and these by battleships; while a British attempt with a few seaplanes to bomb the Zeppelin sheds on the German coast made it necessary to bring out—in similar procession behind them—the whole Grand Fleet. To adopt a very homely simile, both fleets were saying to each other "Dilly, dilly, come and be killed"; but the British were merely implying it by leaving open the door

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of their coop, whereas the Germans were scattering food temptingly along the way to theirs. Naturally, each of the intended victims went warily and preferred to remain out of reach.

This summary, imperfect though it be, of the rival strategies will make it possible to understand the general nature of the work on which the *Australia* and her sisters were engaged. It was in fact triplicate. They were to some extent guardships affording a limited amount of protection to the British coasts of the otherwise unprotected North Sea; lying at Rosyth, they had some chance of intercepting during the return to German bases such cruisers or even destroyers as might endeavour to raid Sunderland or Hartlepool or Yarmouth, whereas the battle-fleet from Scapa or Cromarty had no chance at all. But their main duty was, during the first years of the war, to maintain the highest possible degree of efficiency until the enemy chose to offer battle. "We have suffered all the disadvantages of defensive strategy," admits the British report already quoted; "it is right now that we should reap the benefit of its one advantage—the enemy may choose the day for the battle, but we choose the place." It would be absurd and presumptuous in a volume like this to criticise the policy which produces such a situation; but it is permissible to emphasise the greatness of the burden laid on squadrons working under these conditions, and to point out to Australians the credit due to their representatives in the North Sea, who in no way fell below the high standard of efficiency attained and maintained by the best ships of the mother-country.[5]

To keep thoroughly fit merely on practice and exercises would, however, be impossible. The most insidious deteriorant of fighting value is to grow stale. But the occasional raids across the North Sea served a double purpose: first, strategical—for example, to weaken Germany's hold upon the Baltic by forcing her to bring ships hurriedly westward through the Kiel Canal; and, second, moral—to provide a stimulant for the British crews. The definite goal assigned for such raids was very rarely attained, but officers and men engaged in them felt that they had been doing something real,

[5] It is understood, for example, that the shooting of the *Australia* was good.

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and were inspirited to fresh efforts towards a greater efficiency, which should entail greater success in the future. As it was one of these raids into the Skager Rack that brought about the battle off Jutland, their inspiriting effect was slow in waning; but towards the end of the war it staled, and by 1918 it was recorded unofficially of one such raid that "the Grand Fleet went to sea on a spasm."

A short summary of the chief operations of the Grand Fleet during the earlier half of the *Australia's* service in it —the only period for which detailed records are available— is given at the end of this section; but five operations of those years have been selected for somewhat fuller description, as being typical. The reader should, however, remember that these enterprises were comparatively rare; that the true object of them and the general circumstances in which they took place were rarely known to the crews of the ships engaged; and that these activities were separated by long periods of monotonous routine, which constitute by far the greater part of the life of a sailor in war-time.[6]

The first North Sea operation in which the *Australia* took part (referred to in the entry already quoted—"March 29. Proceeded with squadron to south-east.") was a patrol across that sea carried out by the Grand Fleet and the light forces from Harwich. The excellent British intelligence service— fed partly by reports from British submarines which kept watch off the Heligoland Bight; partly by the army's remarkable espionage organisation in European countries; but, as we now know, most frequently by the amazing wireless garrulity of the German authorities, who did not then know that their messages could be decyphered[7]—had on this occasion received information that the German fleet was leaving its ports. About the time of the *Australia's* arrival, there had been especial reason for suspecting that the enemy intended operations of importance, and it was possible that the German movement was connected with them. The Grand Fleet was ordered to make its usual countermove, but by the night of

[6] For example, the work of the *Australia* in the Grand Fleet in 1915 may be roughly summarised thus: eight patrols across the North Sea, each lasting two or three days; three series of fleet exercises in the open sea, each lasting two or three days, one of them in midwinter; a refit at Cromarty, that took up nine days; and seven or eight days' exercises in Scapa Flow.

[7] See *Life and Letters of Walter H. Page, Second Series, pp. 346-7* in Australian edition; and the German Official History—*Nordsee, Vol. 4, p. 158, etc.*

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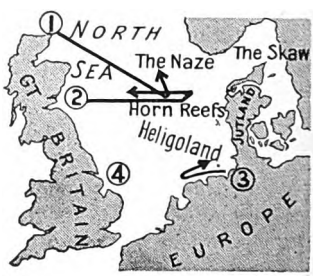
the 29th it was ascertained that the German ships were returning to their ports and the British forces were therefore recalled.

The Grand Fleet's sortie on the 11th of April, which was similarly ordered on the receipt of information that a German sortie was imminent, strikingly illustrates the manner in which such operations at that time tended to develop. On this occasion the Admiralty considering it desirable to hide its foreknowledge of the German movement, ordered the Grand Fleet to be at sea *before* the Germans came out, this course offering an additional advantage in that the position of the British squadrons would be unknown to the enemy. The Germans were, as a matter of fact, planning to lay a new mine-field in the North Sea at the Swarte Bank (about 100 miles from the Humber mouth), and to cover the operation with their whole fleet. But, during the very thorough reconnaissances with which Admiral von Pohl had considered it necessary to prepare for the sortie, one of his Zeppelins had sighted near Terschelling a British light-cruiser squadron, which, with destroyers and submarines, was making eastwards in accordance with the British Admiralty's order. This discovery confirmed him in an erroneous suspicion that the British were themselves about to attack. Through fog and other reasons it was not until the 17th that he considered that the way was sufficiently clear for his own operation. The British Admiralty, which throughout had knowledge of his movements, though not of their precise nature or intention, had by that time ordered its fleet into port for refuelling—causing the abandonment of the full target-practice which the Commander-in-Chief had intended to give his fleet; and, on the night of the 17th, the Grand Fleet put to sea again. By noon next day it was more than half-way to the Danish coast, the battle-cruisers about seventy miles to the south-east of the battle-fleet. During the preceding night, however, the German mine-field had already



(1) *Grand Fleet.* (2) *Battle Cruiser Fleet.* (3) *German High Sea Fleet.* (4) *Swarte Bank.*

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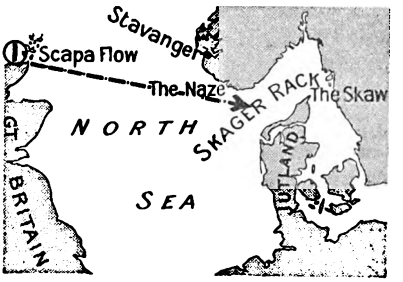
been laid by the enemy's light cruisers *Stralsund* and *Strassburg* 200 miles to the south, and the German High Sea Fleet had, since early morning, been returning to the German coast. The destroyers of the British Harwich Force coming from the south-west had been nearest to it, but never within sight even of its scouting Zeppelin.

The third operation to be described took place towards the end of January, 1916, in the depth of a North Sea winter. The Admiralty had learnt that an armed fleet-auxiliary, possibly a mine-layer, was likely to be traversing the Skager Rack during the morning of the 27th. Jellicoe was informed and was advised to arrange sweeps by cruisers to the Skager Rack so that, if the enemy ship was a mine-layer, she might be met before reaching the British coast. He accordingly ordered the 1st Light Cruiser Squadron at Rosyth to sail at 6 a.m. on the 26th, so as to be off the mouth of the strait at 10 on the 27th, the northern ship within sight of The Naze and the others spread out southwards. Thence it was to sweep to The Skaw at the other end of the strait. In case the light cruisers might be attacked by more powerful enemy forces, the Second Battle Cruiser Squadron (of which the *Australia,* then at Scapa, was flagship) was to come, screened by destroyers, as far as the mouth of the strait, but not farther. If no enemy ship was intercepted in the Skager Rack, a new sweep was to be made next day along the Norwegian coast from about Stavanger south-eastwards towards The Naze. The battle-cruisers would on this occasion form part of the sweeping line, as would the 4th Light Cruiser Squadron, which, with three destroyers, would meanwhile have arrived from Scapa Flow. In accordance with these orders, which were issued at 2 a.m. on the 26th, the *Australia* collected her screen of destroyers, and at 7.50 a.m. sailed for the rendezvous. The two sweeps were duly carried out; a constant traffic of



(1) *Course of Second Battle Cruiser Squadron.*

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small ships was seen moving through Norwegian territorial waters, but no suspicious vessel. The whole British force then withdrew, but was no sooner back in harbour than Jellicoe was informed that, in the Heligoland Bight, German cruisers, supported by a battle-squadron, were on the move. The British fleet was again ordered to instant readiness, but, the German movement subsiding, no further action was necessary.

The fourth operation was one which—by reason of its sequel—brought bitter regrets. It began with another sortie planned by the British with the intention, this time, of interfering with the passage of Swedish iron ore down the Cattegat to Germany. Destroyers were to steam in past The Skaw and examine ships in the Cattegat. A squadron of light cruisers was to be off The Skaw, to support them in case of attack by the enemy's light cruisers. Against the chance that the light cruisers in their turn might be attacked, a battle-cruiser squadron—the Second—was to be off the mouth of the Skager Rack. Finally, as recent experience had shown that the enemy might bring out a squadron of battleships to support his lighter forces, the 2nd Battle Squadron was to support the battle-cruisers. Three submarines were sent beforehand into the Cattegat to lie there in wait for any German force which might emerge from Kiel.

The British forces sailed—first, on the 19th of April, the submarines; next, on the afternoon of the 20th, the destroyers for the Cattegat; next, at midnight, the 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron for The Skaw; then, at 5 a.m. on the 21st, the Second Battle Cruiser Squadron, attended by the 4th Light Cruiser Squadron and six destroyers; last, at 8 a.m., the 2nd Battle Squadron, screened by the 11th Destroyer Flotilla. An extension of the plan had in the meantime been adopted, by which the rest of the Battle Cruiser Fleet (First and Third Squadrons) was to come out from Scapa and Rosyth at nightfall and, with the Second, make a grand sweep towards Horn Reefs.

During that day, however, it became known that the forces in the German harbours were stirring, and, before the First and Third Battle Cruiser Squadrons sailed, it was clear that the whole High Sea Fleet was to be ready for sea that night.

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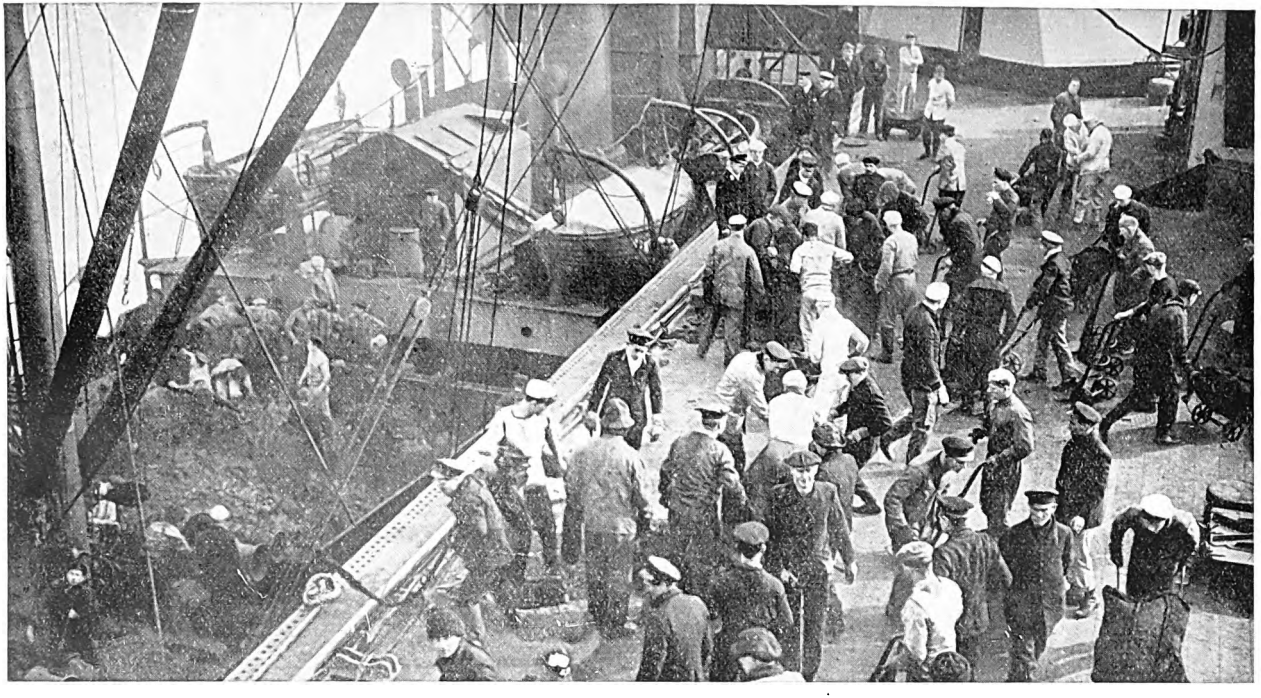

COALING THE *Australia*

British Official Photograph.
Aust. War Memorial Collection No. EN520.

To face p. 272.

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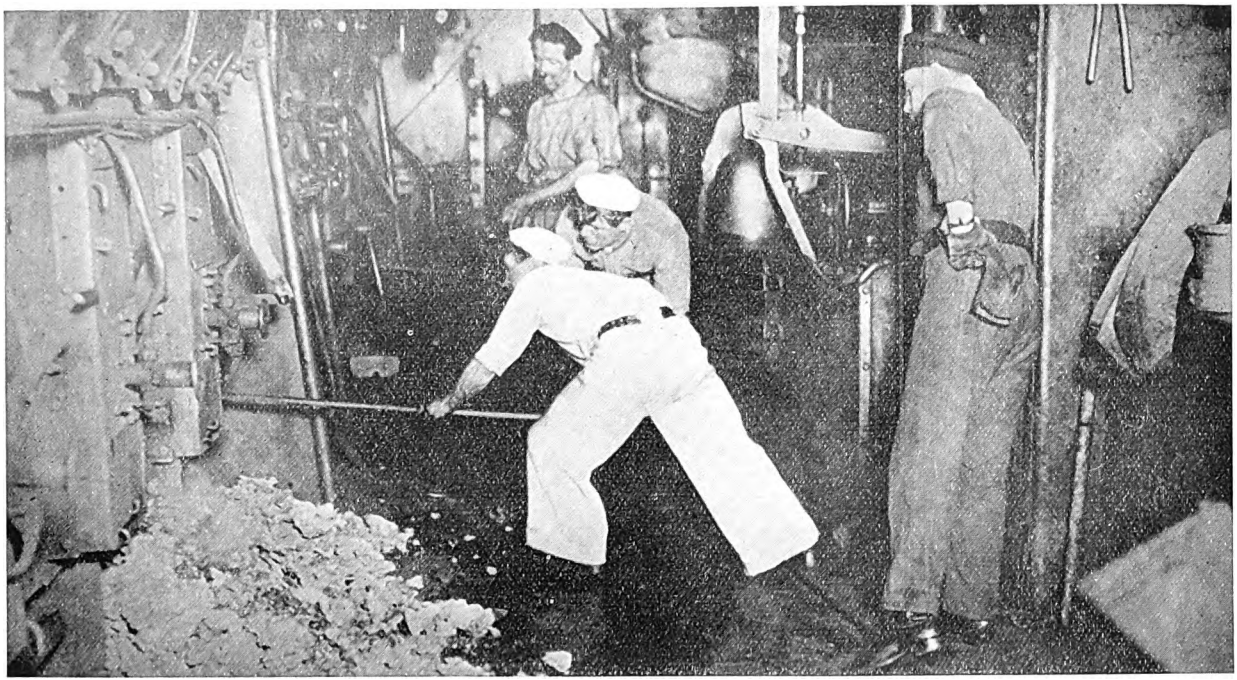

STOKERS AT WORK, H.M.A.S. *Australia*

British Official Photograph.
Aust. War Memorial Collection No. EN535.

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Whether it had wind of the British movement—by decyphering signals or by other means—could only be guessed; but it was evident that, whatever the motive for the movement, the enemy would be prepared for the British destroyers in the Cattegat. The sweep there was accordingly cancelled, and the forces which had sailed to take part in it were ordered to concentrate at a rendezvous half-way across the North Sea. Meanwhile, to meet the German movement, the whole of the Grand Fleet proceeded to sea, concentrating also in the North Sea south-east of the Long Forties. At noon on the 22nd of April it was there, with the Battle Cruiser Fleet concentrated to the south-east. It was known that the whole German battle-fleet had intended to be off Horn Reefs at daylight that morning, and it had in fact been there; but at 9 a.m. the Admiralty ascertained that it was returning to port.

It is now known that the Germans had originally been planning an operation to synchronise with the Irish rebellion. The intention was that two submarines should, about the 18th of April, lay mines at Cromarty and in the Forth respectively; a sweep would subsequently be undertaken by German cruisers in the North Sea, and the High Sea Fleet would dash across to the British coast and bombard it. This would bring out the British fleet, which, in emerging from its bases, might run into the mine-fields laid for it. The cruiser sweep took place, without special incident, during the night of the 20th; but, while the High Sea Fleet was preparing for its sortie, the German decyphering station at Neumunster succeeded in interpreting some British wireless messages indicating that battle-cruisers had sailed from the Forth. This caused the German commander, Admiral Scheer, to defer the execution of his plan and to sail northwards to Horn Reefs. While he was doing so, one of his light cruisers struck a mine, and a British submarine was also sighted. As his airships reported no sign of the British fleet, he turned back.

The British Admiralty now suggested to Jellicoe that he should endeavour to entice the Germans to sea again by sending his light cruisers next morning into the Skager Rack, the Grand Fleet remaining to support them. This Jellicoe did on the night of the 22nd-23rd of April, the light cruisers going well into the strait and returning without incident.

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Unfortunately, this was not the case with the other ships. On the afternoon of the 22nd, while Admiral Beatty with the battle-cruisers was seventy-five miles north-west of Horn Reefs, a dense fog came on. Three destroyers collided; the battleship *Neptune* was run into by a neutral merchantman; and the *Australia,* while zigzagging, collided—by a mishap that was in no way her fault—with the *New Zealand.* Three minutes later the two ships collided again. Both were damaged above water—the *Australia* the more seriously—and were sent straight back to port. When the *Australia* was placed in a floating dock on the Tyne, it was found that it would take two months to repair "serious damage in wake of armour," and she was sent off perforce to Devonport, since floating docks handy to bases were too much in request to be occupied by a single ship for that length of time. At Devonport the repairs were done much more speedily than had been expected, and she was back at Rosyth by the 9th of June.

But the mishap cost her Jutland; and her crew's disgust was in no way alleviated by the consideration that the *New Zealand* had in that fight taken her place as flagship of the Second Battle Cruiser Squadron. It was a slight consolation, perhaps, that the King chose that opportunity of visiting the ship (on the 16th of June) and of complimenting her officers and crew on the many other services they had already rendered to the Empire.

The last of the five operations to be here described was one initiated by the enemy, whose strategy contemplated not so much a straightforward fight between the fleets as an entrapping of the Grand Fleet into ambushes laid by submarines or with mines. While the campaign against commerce was going on—that is, until the last week in April, 1916[8]—most German submarines were occupied in sinking

[8] Attacks by German submarines on merchant ships had begun at the end of 1914; after the *Lusitania* was sunk (on 7 May 1915), the campaign was modified by the issue of a secret order from the Kaiser that large passenger ships should not be torpedoed without warning. In spite of this, on 19 August 1915 the *Arabic* was sunk. Exasperation in America caused the German Government to issue a wider prohibition—that all passenger ships should be spared. This caused the temporary abandonment of the campaign, but in November 1915 the order was relaxed to permit attack upon ships leaving the Channel ports on the French coast. In February 1916 (when, in spite of an appeal from America, Britain insisted upon her right to arm merchant ships), the campaign again became active, but the torpedoeing on 24 March of the French cross-Channel steamer *Sussex,* full of passengers, brought an ultimatum from America, and in April the campaign was definitely closed. Its resumption in February 1917 brought America into the war.

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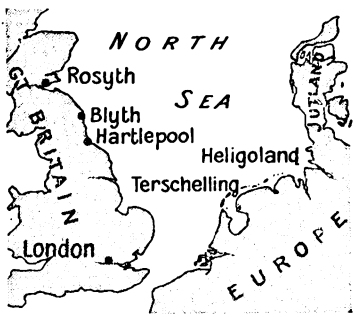
merchant-vessels, and very few could be spared to lay traps for British warships. But when, to soothe President Wilson's feelings, Germany decided to stop sinking merchant-vessels without warning, the submarines thus employed were recalled to Heligoland, and Admiral Scheer devised an extensive system of traps, involving the use of twenty-two submarines off the Grand Fleet's principal bases. For reasons too complicated to discuss here, his first plan failed, and indeed ended in the battle off Jutland; but in August he decided to try again (having learnt from that battle how to take full advantage of his enemy's weaknesses), and established a new series of submarine traps. This time he set them, not off British bases, where they would be looked for and guarded against, but in lines at right angles to unfrequented parts of the coast — six off Blyth in Northumberland and six farther south off Yorkshire; the rest were stationed off Terschelling on the German coast. Scheer's scheme was to make a big demonstration against Hartlepool in Durham, even to the extent of bombarding it if necessary, in order to bring the Grand Fleet down the coast and across his waiting submarines. If Jellicoe's ships escaped that trap, he would hasten back across the North Sea, with them in pursuit, until they were drawn into the ambush off Terschelling. He was not looking for any more Jutlands, although his experience there had given him confidence in the resisting powers of his own ships; he was as anxious as Jellicoe to maintain his fleet "in being" for a final effort when the war should be obviously nearing its end.



News of the proposed raid reached the Grand Fleet on the 18th of August, and by midnight the British fleets were under way and steaming southwards. Jellicoe, who had been in London in consultation with the Admiralty, came from

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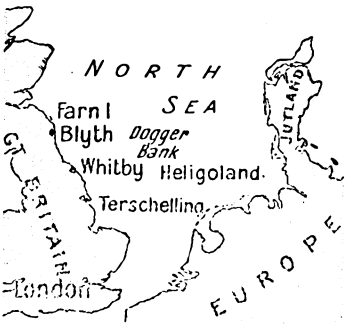
Rosyth in a destroyer to join them. As usual, the battle-cruisers were about thirty miles in advance of the main body, with a screen of light cruisers still farther ahead. About 6 a.m. on the 19th one of these, the *Nottingham,* ran into the ambush off Blyth and was twice torpedoed and sunk. At once Jellicoe swung back northwards, ordering the battle-cruisers to keep within sight of the main fleet's scouts; after consideration, however, he decided to protect the English ports against Scheer's attack, and returned southwards a little farther from the coast, sighting a Zeppelin about 9.45 a.m. and receiving reports of many others. He was sure, therefore, that Scheer knew all about his movements; probably by this time he had comprehended the German plans. At noon he was ninety-five miles east of the Farn Islands, Beatty with the battle-cruisers about thirty miles ahead of him, and Scheer's main body more than half-way across the North Sea about ninety miles east of Whitby, with the British flotilla from Harwich hanging on its flank. At 2.15 Jellicoe signalled to the fleet—"Enemy fleet may be sighted at any time. I look with entire confidence to the result," at the same time sending Beatty east across the Dogger Bank to cut off Scheer's retreat. That leader, however, well served by his Zeppelins, was already turning back; if his Blyth trap had missed, the Terschelling trap was still set. But Jellicoe, the plan once understood, was not to be caught. At 3.20 p.m. he recalled Beatty, and at 4 p.m. made back for his bases, keeping the most careful watch for submarines; these were sighted by at least a dozen British ships, though only one light cruiser, the *Falmouth,* fell a victim.[9] Scheer was followed back towards Heligoland by the Harwich



[9] The *Falmouth,* like the *Nottingham,* was struck by two torpedoes and sunk. During the return voyage torpedoes were fired by a submarine belonging to the Blyth trap at the *New Zealand* and the *Inflexible,* which were immediately astern of the *Australia.* This happened just about dusk (7.48 p.m.), and only the prompt warning given by a protecting destroyer, the *Lapwing,* saved the big cruisers from severe damage.

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destroyers, which he at last drove off by means of Zeppelin demonstrations. And thus tamely ended the boldest stroke —and the last—ever attempted by the High Sea Fleet against its British rival.[10] How inexplicable the whole operation was to those not actually in the secret of Scheer's designs may be judged from the account given of it by the Russian attaché to the Grand Fleet, Commodore von Schoultz.[11]

One may now understand what service almost at its most active meant to Australians on duty in the very centre of the war. Of actual fighting, of visible enemy, not a trace; merely a prolonged chase over seas peopled solely by traders and fishermen (though strewn here and there with submarine-made wrecks), of a foe believed to exist somewhere, but beyond the vision of any man in the squadron; and then, just when the crews were stimulated to their utmost efforts by the Admiral's signal and the hope that at any moment enemy masts might lift above the horizon, an order out of the air, sharp words of command throughout the ship, and . . . the return to an undesired harbour and another age of uncomprehending disappointment. Such is the real naval war; Trafalgar and Jutland are but episodes, all-important, no doubt, when they occur, but by no means inevitable or even probable. The drama of sea-strategies rarely admits of a fifth-act climax.

Beyond the summer of 1916 the available records furnish only a bare outline from which to deduce the nature of the work upon which the *Australia* was engaged. Her full story, therefore, cannot be told until the volumes of the British official history still to be published, or such data as may be furnished through the Admiralty's courtesy, disclose in a full narrative the doings of the Grand Fleet as a whole and the policy that directed it. We can only piece together from scattered documents and undivulgent logs the general character of her work and a few episodes of its performance. The real history of her four years in the North Sea is contained in the four maps which accompany this chapter—1915, with its repeated excursions into the North Sea, its

[10] Scheer himself was, however, quite satisfied with what he had done, and set about planning an improved version. But in October his superiors decided to resume the campaign against merchant shipping, and he was deprived of his best submarines, without which his whole scheme was futile.

[11] *With the British Battle Fleet, pp. 192-200.*

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raid to the Skager Rack, its divergencies towards Iceland; 1916, when the Norwegian coast began to attract attention, Scapa was more frequently visited, and the tracks are more scanty because of the ship's long sojourn in dock; 1917, the year when the smaller craft did the work and the big ships voyaged mainly for exercise between Rosyth and Scapa Flow, with occasional scouting north-eastwards to intercept raiders; 1918, the year when the big ships took their turn at escorting indispensable convoys, and zigzagged their way across the North Sea like so many destroyers. Incessant preparations, perpetual readiness for actions that never were fought, untiring strife with one of the stormiest seas in the world, and with a climate that to Australians seemed almost perennial winter—under such conditions the *Australia* still defended off Britain the Commonwealth that she had saved from German attacks in the Pacific and justified the enthusiasm of her countrymen and the foresight of those who had conceived her.

During 1917[12]—the first year of the intensified submarine campaign, when week after week brought news of more and yet more sinkings and there seemed a distant possibility that Britain might be starved out before the enemy's most dangerous weapon could be mastered—the *Australia* was condemned with her fellows to what was for the most part routine work.[13] The card abstract of her log is simply—

1917. Jan.-May. Rosyth and Scapa Flow.
26 June. H.M. the King.
July-Oct. Rosyth and Scapa Flow.

[12] It was in this year that the *Australia* received part of the first batch of Australian cadet-midshipmen drafted from the R.A.N. College at Jervis Bay, of whom 23 joined the Grand Fleet in 1917 and 29 in 1918 (for details see *Appendix No. 5*). Of these, E. S. Cunningham (of Hurstville and Armidale, N.S.W.) subsequently lost his life in a submarine in the North Sea (31 Jan., 1918), and F. L. Larkins (of East Melbourne) was lost overboard from submarine *J 2* in Carimata Straits, East Indies, on the homeward journey to Australia (20 June, 1919).

[13] An incident which occurred in the *Australia* in May, 1917, during the common exercise of clearing ship for action has since been related by one who took part (Mr. A. C. Newton; of Maryport, England, and Cheltenham, Vic.). A lyddite shell for one of the 12-inch turret guns stuck in the hydraulic hoist. It was found that the fuze had been allowed to catch a projection inside the trunk, and had been crumpled by the hoist, any attempt to remove it being thus rendered most dangerous. Lieutenant-Commander F. C. Darley (of Little Bookham, Surrey, England, and Sydney, N.S.W.) thereupon ordered everyone out of the turret magazines and shell rooms; he then climbed down the lift, and with crow-bar and spanner succeeded in releasing the shell and extracting the fuze. After throwing the fuze overboard—a method which probably disposed of the need for awkward enquiries—he "went to his cabin and lit the inevitable cigarette." (Darley was killed on 5th September, 1926, while leading a desperate attempt to board a British river-steamer which

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Her other official records mainly concern the regulation of mine-laying operations, which in some way came under the control of the admiral in command of the Second Battle Cruiser Squadron. Only two events seem to have broken the long monotony of practices, exercises, and patrols;[14] in June, as is stated above, the King paid the Australian flagship a second visit, and on the 12th of December she came into collision with H.M.S. *Repulse* and sustained damages which kept her in dock for nearly three weeks. But in 1918 the big ships found new work to do, as the map will show. By that time the convoy system was in full swing between Britain and Norway, and two German attempts to hamper it by attacks with surface-craft had to be met by providing still larger craft to support the small escorting craft, until even battleships were employed; a fuller description of this phase of the naval war will be found in the section dealing with the *Melbourne* and *Sydney* in the North Sea. Further, the *Australia* was apparently used for experiments with aeroplanes; the first appears to have occurred on the 18th of December, 1917, when—apparently for the first time on record—a machine was launched from the deck by Flight-Lieutenant Fox.[15] On the 8th of March, 1918, a two-seater seaplane was successfully launched from a short deck constructed on a turret and prolonged over the chase of the turret-guns, and another successful flight was made on the 14th of May. In February eleven volunteers —an engineer officer and ten ratings—were detached to take part in the ever-famous raid on Ostend and Zeebrugge, which occurred on the 23rd of April, 1918.[16] The officer, Engineer-Lieutenant Edgar,[17] was in charge of the engine-room of the Mersey ferry-boat *Iris,* whose duty was to attend the *Vindictive* and land a storming party on the Zeebrugge

had been seized by militant Chinese at Wanhsien. Immediately before going into that action he had read prayers, warned his men not to kill unnecessarily, and written to his mother: "I pray to God that I shall do nothing that may bring discredit on the White Ensign.")

[14] These were rarer by that time, since the submarine and the occasional raider on its way in or out were better dealt with by destroyers and mines and light cruisers than by the big ships.

[15] Capt. F. M. Fox, R.A.F.

[16] A list of the Australian volunteers and some particulars are given in *Appendix No. 25.*

[17] Engr.-Lieut.-Commr. W. H. V. Edgar, D.S.C.; R.A.N.; b. Dunedin. N.Z., 20 April, 1884.

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mole. The other Australians appear to have been divided, the seamen going as bombers with the *Vindictive's* storming party, and the stokers in the *Thetis,* the leader of the three ships which were to block the channel. In spite of the heavy losses in their several ships and on the mole, Edgar and the rest of the detachment returned in safety.

The official documents of this year concern themselves mainly with reports—about the sighting of enemy mines and the laying of new British and American mine-fields—which were transmitted through the *Australia* as flagship. Sometimes the objects sighted were undoubtedly mines ("spherical with flat disc secured to small projection on top of mine, about five horns projecting radially around greatest circumference, about six inches long, colour greenish-grey"), sometimes they were found on consideration to be merely buoys that had gone adrift; but everything suspicious was noted and reported and registered at headquarters. The work of the intelligence branch became more important and more persistent than ever; in October an operation is noted in which six destroyers, seven sloops, and no less than twenty-four trawlers were sent to patrol a gap between mine-fields through which enemy submarines might be passing—"one outward-bound cruiser type carries two 5.9″ guns, her periscopes are probably damaged, and she can only dive to a small depth." In September and October the Second Battle Cruiser Squadron was used to protect mine-laying squadrons north of the Orkneys, and filled in its time for the most part with noticing the number of mines that exploded as soon as they were laid.

> 2nd Mine-laying Squadron commenced to lay their mines about 1440 (*i.e.*, 2.40 p.m.). Very shortly afterwards mines were seen to explode, generally singly, but occasionally one mine would detonate two or three others. This detonation of mines continued throughout the operation. . . . I continued on that course, arriving abreast of the mines which had been laid 2½ hours previously and which were still detonating . . . a very high percentage, which I feel inclined to place as high as 40 per cent, were detonated.
>
> Roughly speaking, detonations commenced shortly after 1500.[18] These detonations were actually seen, and occurred on an average about every two minutes.

These observations were made during a September patrol; in October the detonations were more exactly observed, the

[18] That is, 3 p.m., the hour when the *Australia* left Scapa Flow on this operation.

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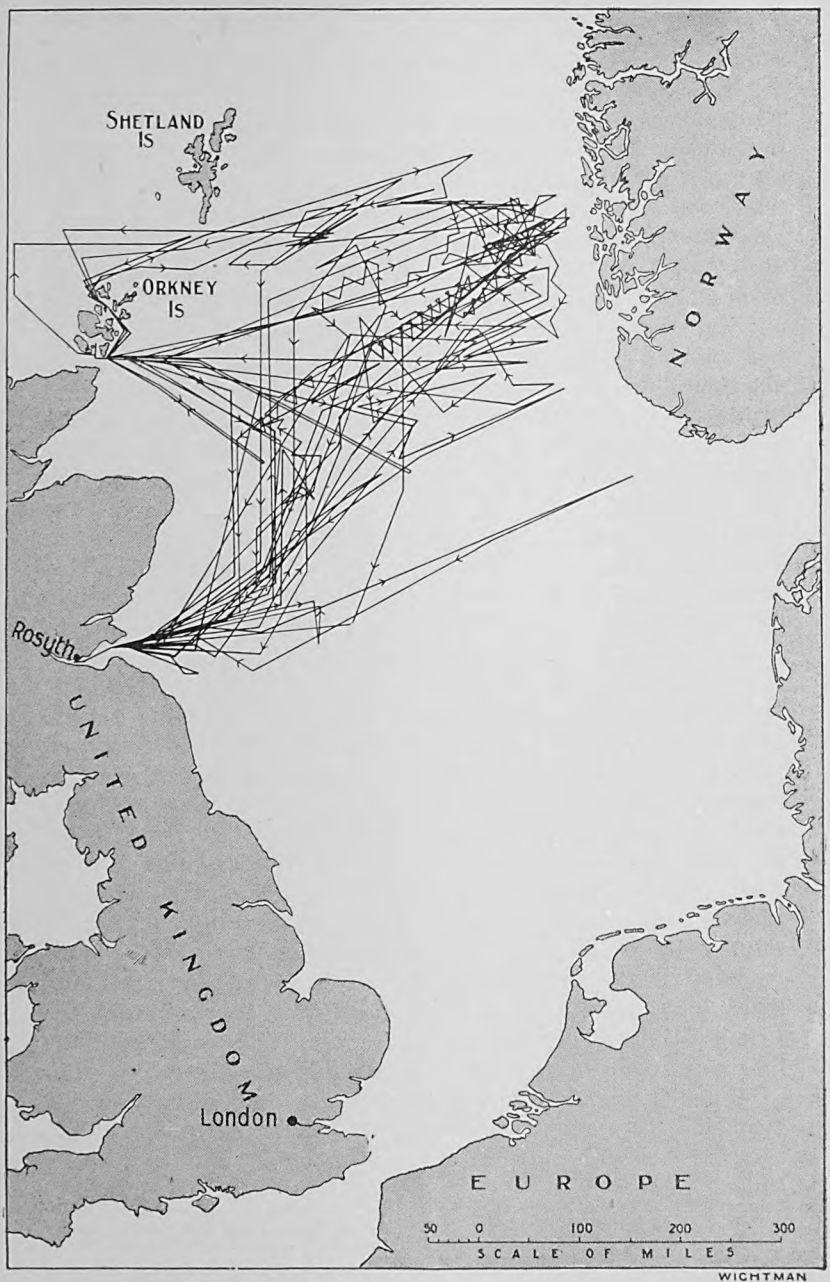

THE MOVEMENTS OF H.M.A.S. *Australia* DURING 1918

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Australia in eleven hours noting nearly 300, while her fellow the *Inflexible* noted 388. A destroyer of the accompanying flotilla excused her lack of attention by remarking that "it is the usual thing to hear these explosions when in the vicinity of the American Mine-laying Squadron laying mines."

In such routine work and in the wearisome and unexciting protection of convoys and mine-layers the *Australia* spent her last months of North Sea war. At the close of them she led the port division of the Grand Fleet at the grim pageant of the enemy fleet's surrender. Then, having brought her smaller Australian comrades back to their home ports, she found herself—like many more famous ships—past her prime, and unequal to the new conditions which were the outcome of experience. Notwithstanding, she might have sufficed Australia's needs for many years of peace—for she was still, by the admission of a notable British admiral, the least obsolescent of her class—had not the Powers agreed at Washington on a general limitation of naval strength. This resolution made it impossible for any of them to retain among their lessened navies ships which at all fell short of full efficiency; and not even to soothe Australian pride could the Imperial Admiralty consent that the *Australia* (which, from the international point of view, was British) should continue to exist in lieu of a stronger ship. Wherefore, stripped of all useful gear, of all fittings that might serve as mementoes, almost of all semblance of a warship, she was sunk with honours off the coast of her own country, which she had so efficiently protected. On Saturday the 12th of April, 1924, she was towed out through the heads of Port Jackson, escorted by her comrades of the Squadron and saluted by a visiting light cruiser squadron of the new Imperial navy, to a point twenty-four miles due east, and there in 150 fathoms she lies to-day.[19] "This," said the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth that evening, "the first great ship of the young Australian navy, was our contribution to the defence of civilisation. In her passing she symbolises our contribution to the cause of peace. We sacrifice her with a regret rendered poignant by the memory of her great service."

[19] At the suggestion of the Anzac Fellowship of Women, the decks of the battle-cruiser before she left harbour for the last time were strewn with flowers sent by those who desired to commemorate her service.

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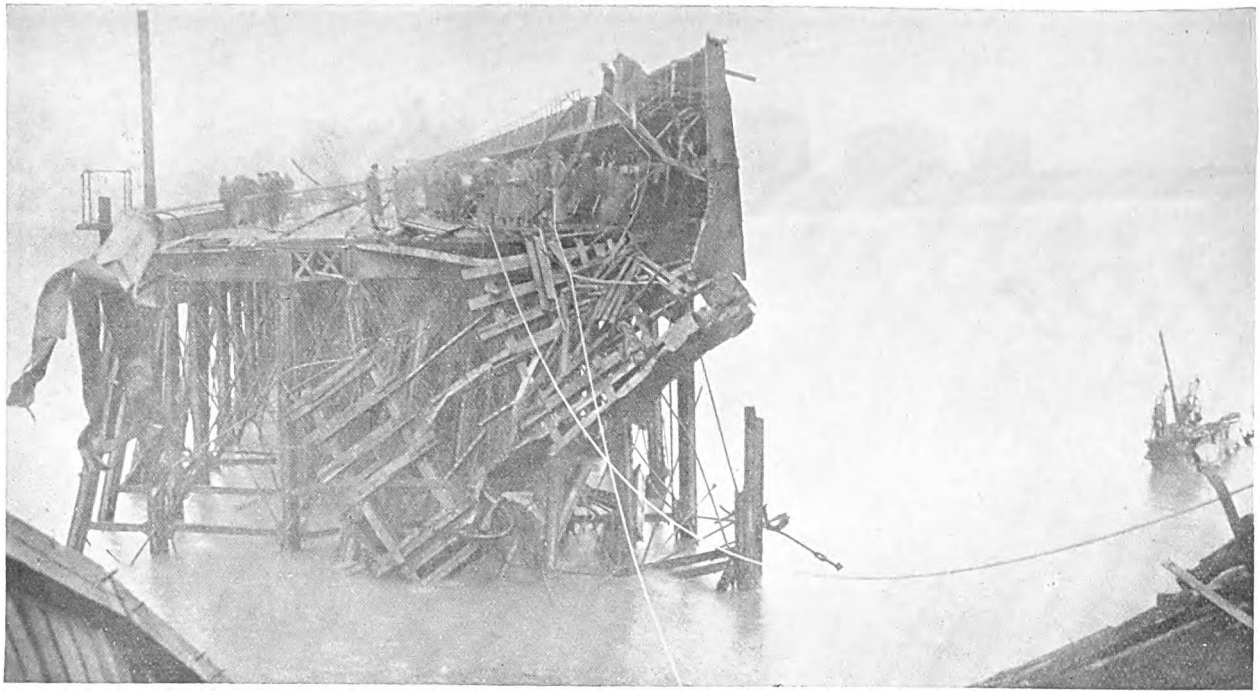

THE DESTROYED MOLE AT ZEEBRUGGE

German Official Photograph.

To face p. 284.

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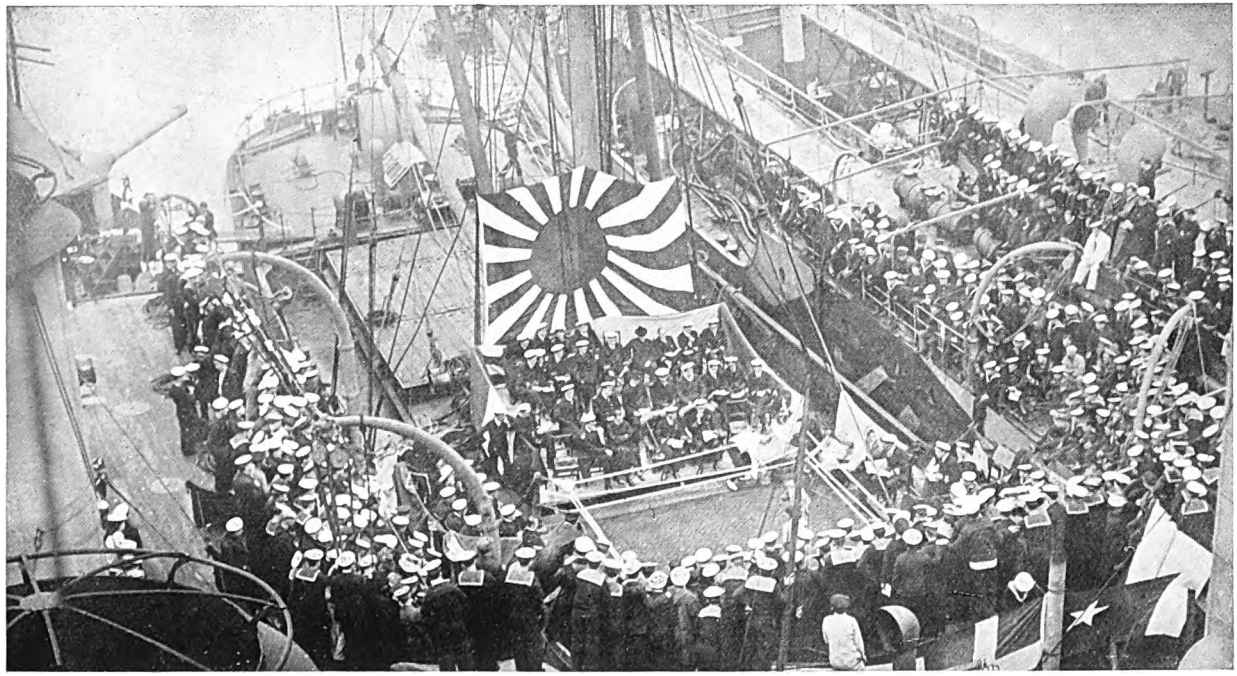

THE AUSTRALIAN NAVAL BOXING TOURNAMENT AT ROSYTH, 5 MAY 1918

Three vessels were grouped so as to accommodate spectators.

Lent by W. J. Kemp, Esq., Albury.
Aust. War Memorial Collection No. EN181.

To face p. 285.

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The chief operations of the Grand Fleet during the earlier part of the *Australia's* service in the North Sea were the following. Those in which she took part are marked with an asterisk.

1915.

* 29-30 March. Operation already described in this section.

* 5-8 April. Battle-cruisers exercised east of Shetlands.

* 11-18 April. Operation and exercises already described in this section.

* 21 April. The German High Sea Fleet put to sea with the main object of affording evidence that it was not, as the British press alleged, blockaded in its ports; a secondary motive was that of destroying British patrols reported to be on the Dogger Bank. In all 21 German dreadnoughts, 12 light cruisers, and 52 destroyers sailed, and, during the morning of the 22nd, the advanced forces were near the Dogger Bank. The fleet's scouting Zeppelin, however, could find no trace of British ships except a trawler, which was forthwith sunk. Meanwhile the British Fleet—though the German commander was unaware of the fact—had carried out its usual countermove, proceeding towards a rendezvous off the mouth of the Skager Rack. On learning from the Admiralty that the Germans had returned to port, it came back. British submarines sent into the Heligoland Bight to waylay the returning Germans arrived too late.

2-4 May. The light forces of the Grand Fleet carried out a sweep of the Scandinavian routes.

* 17-18 May. The Germans laid a mine-field on the Dogger Bank, the High Sea Fleet moving out to support them. The British Grand Fleet being informed was ordered to sea the same morning. On 18 May, learning that the Germans were returning to port, it put back.

* 29-30 May. The German High Sea Fleet came out to cover the departure of an armed mine-layer. The same night the British Grand Fleet sailed eastward to a rendezvous, and then turned south. On the afternoon of the 30th it was informed by the Admiralty that the Germans were returning to port, and accordingly put back. The Germans noted that, on the occasions of this and of the previous sortie, the actions of the British Fleet closely followed on their own. From this they inferred that the intended movements of their fleet were reported to the British by spies in influential positions. "If for the basis of their deductions," says the German official history, "they had looked earlier and more resolutely into their own wireless system, they would more quickly have got upon the right track."

June. The Germans having now laid their mine-fields, the activity of the High Sea Fleet decreased. The Grand Fleet therefore went out only once in June (on the 11th*) for firing and battle exercises.

* 28-31 July. In order to interfere with the passage of Swedish iron ore from Norway to Germany, a sweep by destroyers and light cruisers supported by the Second Battle Cruiser Squadron was undertaken in the Skager Rack. One German trawler was sunk.

August-September. The *Australia*, lying at Rosyth during these months, does not appear to have taken part in the three following enterprises.

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8 August. It was discovered that the Germans had succeeded in laying a mine-field during the previous night in Moray Firth, endangering the movement of the part of the Grand Fleet based on Cromarty. The mine-layer—*Meteor*—was intercepted before she could regain the German coast, and was sunk by her own commander. In the hope of catching two other supposed mine-layers, Jellicoe ordered a cruiser sweep in the North Sea on the 16-18 August, supported by the Third Battle Cruiser Squadron, but no suspicious vessels were found.

2 September. The whole of the Grand Fleet went out for exercises south-west of the Faroe Bank.

10-11 September. The British had attempted in August to lay a mine-field on the Amrum Bank across one of the passages used by the High Sea Fleet. The attempt had been foiled by an accidental meeting with German destroyers, but it was repeated with the support of the First and Third Battle Cruiser Squadrons on the night of the 11th of September. The field was duly laid by the *Orvieto* (then converted into a mine-layer), no enemy being encountered. By a strange coincidence, the Germans on the following night, unsuspected by the British, crossed the North Sea in their turn and again mined the Swarte Bank. The High Sea Fleet came out in support, and, returning, ran into the *Orvieto's* mine-field. Many of the British mines then in use, however, would not keep their depth, but came to the surface, and the field was discovered in time to avert damage, except to one German destroyer.

23 October. The High Sea Fleet came out, but, as the wind was too strong for its Zeppelins, returned before the Grand Fleet had left harbour.

2-5 November. The Grand Fleet exercised.

6-7 November. Light cruisers, supported by the First and Third Battle Cruiser Squadrons, swept to the Skager Rack without result.

17 November. German destroyers swept the Cattegat to harass trade between Scandinavia and England—a feat in which the Germans took much pride.

* 29 November-2 December. Battle Cruiser Fleet exercised in the North Sea during a sweep by the Harwich Force to the Skager Rack. German destroyers which happened to be in the Cattegat on 30 November were withdrawn so as to avoid their discovery.

* 1-5 December. Grand Fleet exercised.

1916.

2 January. German raider *Moewe* laid mines off the approaches to Pentland Firth and then left for the French coast and the Atlantic. The mine-field was discovered four days later.

17 January. The High Sea Fleet came out, wireless messages of the Grand Fleet having been wrongly construed to indicate that British destroyers were about to sweep the Heligoland Bight. This was the Fleet's first sortie under its new commander, Admiral Scheer, who favoured a more active policy than his predecessor. The Admiralty knew of the sortie, but Jellicoe was not informed.

* 25-28 January. Operations already described in this section.

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28 January. An intended enterprise, in which British sea-planes were to bomb airship sheds at Hage, was frustrated by German submarines. Raids on Great Britain by German airships and seaplanes had been resumed during this month.

* 10 February. The Admiralty, expecting a raid by German battle-cruisers, ordered the Grand Fleet to move south in anticipation. As fog prevented the enemy from coming out, this order was cancelled. German destroyers, however, having come out to reconnoitre ahead of their fleet, encountered some British sloops which were mine-sweeping, and which the Admiralty, desiring to preserve wireless silence, had been unable to warn. The *Arabis* was thus sunk. On receiving news of the attack, the Harwich Force and Battle Cruiser Fleet came out at once (1 a.m., 11 February) and, as powerful German forces were understood to be emerging, the Grand Fleet also sailed southwards. By 8 a.m., however, it had been ascertained that the Germans were retiring, and the British therefore returned to harbour.

* 26 February. Grand Fleet and Battle Cruiser Fleet exercised. The weather was too rough for an intended sweep in conjunction with the Harwich Force.

* 6 March. An operation long planned by Admiral Scheer was begun. German submarines having first mined almost all exits from the south-eastern British ports, and Zeppelins having raided Hull, the High Sea Fleet was, at 5.30 a.m. on 6 March, ordered to sea. The similar order of the Admiralty to the Grand Fleet was only a few hours later. The Harwich Force came out, without damage from mines, and almost chanced upon the German scouting force; the two did not, however, meet and, the Germans returning, the British also put back.

* 11 March. A sweep to the mouth of the Skager Rack was commenced in bad weather. As it was found that the screen of destroyers could not keep up with the battle-cruisers, the operation was abandoned.

* 24-26 March. British seaplanes raided a supposed airship base at Hoyer on the Schleswig coast. The seaplane-carrier *Vindex* was supported by light forces, which again were supported by the Grand Fleet. The High Sea Fleet had intended to make a sortie, and, in the dark, a German destroyer was cut in two by a British light cruiser. Two British cruisers were also damaged by collision—and a damaged destroyer, the *Medusa*, had eventually to be abandoned. The retirement of the Harwich Force was rendered very slow by the attempt to cover her. The battle-cruisers were off the Danish coast for 27 hours, more than half that time without their attendant destroyers. Believing the Harwich Force to be endangered, Beatty had come south to cover it; he had then turned north, remained at sea all night, by order of the Admiralty, and, hearing that the High Sea Fleet was coming out, came south again. In the wild weather prevailing, his speed was reduced. The Germans, who with their battle-cruisers and two squadrons of the battle-fleet were making northwards, found the sea so rough that they abandoned the sortie—thus missing a chance of falling on the unsupported British battle-cruisers.

31 March-5 April. On 31 March the German submarine *U 7* laid 34 mines in the Forth, and, on every one of these days except one, German airships raided Great Britain. On the night of 2 April *L 11*, in an attempt to find the base at Rosyth, bombarded Edinburgh.

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*21-23 April. Operations already described in this section. The *Australia* collided with the *New Zealand.*

25 April. Germans at dawn bombarded Lowestoft.

3-4 May. Raid by British mine-layers and seaplanes, supported by the Grand Fleet.

30 May. Upon receiving indications of a German sortie preceded by movements of a large number of enemy submarines, the Grand Fleet was ordered to sea. Next day occurred the Battle of Jutland.

II

The work that fell to the lot of the light cruisers when they were transferred from the North Atlantic to the North Sea was patrolling of a very different kind from that in which they had been hitherto engaged. It would be difficult to find two more violently contrasted climates than those of the West Indies in summer and of the North Sea in winter: and the steady but very uneventful search for enemy merchant vessels, even though occasionally diversified with rumours of a stray raider or submarine, had nothing in common with the perpetual vigilance, the sweeps across stormy seas to the Norwegian coast, the "dark night patrols" in search of enemy mine-layers, the sudden orders to raise steam for twenty-two knots at an hour's notice when lying quietly in harbour, that made up life at Scapa and Rosyth. "These spasms of raising steam," noted a man of the *Sydney,* "are of very common occurrence at Rosyth." But the light cruisers were better off than the battle-cruisers, which were kept so prepared that they could leave port within thirty minutes in any emergency.

The *Melbourne,* as has been said, left Bermuda on the 28th of August, 1916, and reached Plymouth on the 7th of September: there her crew were given three weeks' leave, and when they returned at the end of the month they found an anti-aircraft gun and other improvements installed—an omen of the more strenuous work ahead. She reached Scapa Flow on the 6th of October, and on the 21st was attached to the 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron at Rosyth. From the 5th to the 19th of November she was flagship of the squadron. Meanwhile the *Sydney,* leaving Bermuda on the 9th of September and reaching Devonport on the 19th, was almost immediately sent off to Greenock, and spent the greater part of October in dock at Govan—where she was born. On the

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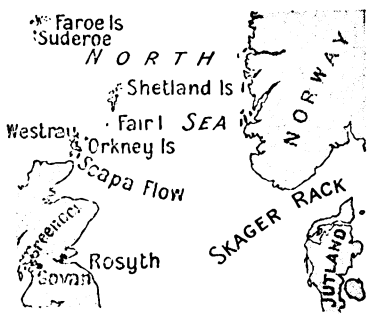
31st she reached Scapa and was temporarily attached to the 5th Battle Squadron, but on the 15th of November left Scapa for Rosyth and on arrival there was in her turn attached to the 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron,[20] which thenceforward consisted of four sister-ships, the *Southampton* (usually the flagship), *Dublin, Melbourne,* and *Sydney.* The two Australian ships were, according to a telegram from the Admiralty to the Naval Board, included in this squadron because it was "in immediate administrative relation in the Grand Fleet organisation to Admiral Pakenham's command"; that is to say, because in the 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron they would be associated with the Second Battle Cruiser Squadron, of which the *Australia* was flagship.

The *Melbourne's* first experience of North Sea patrol work was on the 19th of October, 1916, when with the *Weymouth* and four destroyers (two cruisers from Scapa joining up later) she took part in a sweep off the coast of Norway. The ships were strung out between 59° 30′ N. lat., 1° E. long., and 60° N. lat., 4° 20′ E. long., and then swept down in wide zigzags in a direction generally parallel with the coast; having done this on two days successively without intercepting an enemy vessel,[21] they returned to port.



On the 1st of December[22] the *Sydney* had her first taste of patrol work, being detached with two destroyers on a "dark night" patrol;[23] ten days later there was

[20] The British light cruisers *Nottingham* and *Falmouth* had been torpedoed when searching for the enemy during a sortie of the German High Sea Fleet on the 19 August, 1916 (*see p. 277*).

[21] Only one neutral vessel was intercepted.

[22] At the end of November Admiral Jellicoe became First Sea Lord of the Admiralty, and all subsequent operations of the light cruisers were carried out while Admiral Beatty was in high command.

[23] "The object of these patrols," wrote a member of the *Sydney's* crew, "is to prevent fishing or other vessels from laying mines, &c., off the naval bases. The light cruiser steams along with the two destroyers astern; when a light, or a dark object, is sighted, one of the destroyers is detailed to examine it, and the light cruisers back the destroyers up, in case anything happens. Ships carrying out these operations leave harbour about two hours before dark, and return to harbour at daylight."

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bigger work to do, and the whole squadron[24] left Rosyth for Scapa, and thence, on the 12th, proceeded on a patrol "to intercept a possible raider," along a line between Westray in the Orkneys and Suderoe in the Faroe group. On the 13th six destroyers, which were attached to the squadron as an anti-submarine screen, had to be sent back before nightfall owing to the heavy weather; on the 14th the patrol was discontinued,[25] but early on the 15th the squadron was again hunting for an enemy raider supposed to be on her way past Fair Island. The search was unsuccessful, and by the evening all the ships were back in Scapa. This was on the whole a favourable sample of the cruisers' winter work; their next job —a sweep along the Norwegian coast on the 19th-21st of December—was more damaging and no more successful. Two of the accompanying destroyers (the *Hoste* and *Negro*) collided, and were sunk by the explosion of a depth-charge. The *Sydney's* cutters were smashed, her whaler washed away;[26] a boy, Wright,[27] was killed, Commander Finlayson,[28] Lieutenant-Commander Rahilly, and six men were more or less seriously injured. From the *Melbourne* a man was washed overboard and a signalman thrown from the rigging.[29]

On the 29th the cruisers were given a new task. Enemy submarines were giving more trouble than for many months —a few weeks later the "unrestricted" submarine war was due to commence—and various schemes for destroying them were under trial. In the end only depth-charges were found thoroughly satisfactory, but at the moment a good deal was hoped for from the employment of a specialised type of paravane, towed at some depth, and fashioned to explode either on contact or by an electric firer operated aboard the

[24] With H.M.S. *Dundee* attached.

[25] During this patrol one trawler was examined and one steamer questioned.

[26] A vivid account of this incident by a leading signalman of the *Sydney* is given in *Appendix No. 24.*

[27] Boy 1st Class R. R. Wright (O.N. 4459; R.A.N.); of Semaphore, S. Aust.; b. Peterhead, S. Aust., 2 June, 1900. Killed, 21 Dec., 1916.

[28] Capt. J. F. Finlayson, R.N. Of Leichhardt, N.S.W.; b. Sydney, 12 May, 1883.

[29] In addition to the operations mentioned in this narrative, records available in Australia show that during 1916 Australian ships in the North Sea also took part in the following:

4 September. Sweep by 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron with Second Battle Cruiser Squadron "to let presence of H.M. ships become known to the enemy through neutral traffic."

21-23 November. Sweep by *Dublin*, *Melbourne*, and four destroyers. Several mines destroyed and vessels boarded.

3-9 December. Sweep by *Melbourne*, *Southampton*, and four destroyers. Small derelict found.

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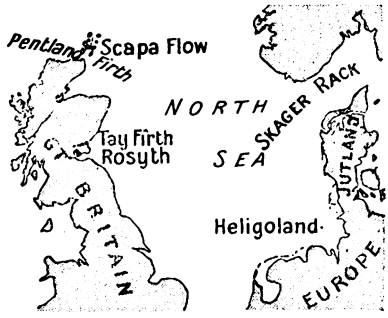
towing vessel. Reports had come in that German submarines, possibly accompanied by armed trawlers, were operating about half-way between Jutland and the mouth of the Tay, and the Australian cruisers, with twelve destroyers, were sent out from Rosyth to hunt for them.[30] The process was simple, but not very effective. Eight destroyers in line, one mile apart, swept the suspected area with their paravanes, zigzagging at sixteen-and-a-half knots; three miles behind came the cruisers, each guarded by two destroyers.[31] On the 30th the operation was carried out; one destroyer, the *Patrician,* had her starboard paravane exploded by impact (probably on wreckage, for no oil appeared on the surface) and her port paravane by the explosion of its fellow. Next day the cruisers returned to Rosyth—and went straight into quarantine for German measles.



It is convenient here to note the routine of gunnery practice which occupied the ships when not otherwise engaged. Practice was carried out with reduced charges in a bight of Scapa Flow, with full charges at a battle-practice target in the Pentland Firth, where the tide-races and innumerable eddies reduced to a minimum the danger from submarine interference. Every ship was supposed to carry out one full-calibre practice and three sub-calibre practices a month, but the conditions were carefully varied. Thus for the Australian cruisers the January practice tested each ship's individual skill at extreme ranges; in February the practice was divisional, testing concentration and dispersion of fire

[30] The operation was rendered difficult by bad weather. Nine vessels were boarded.

[31] The *Sydney's* diarist already quoted supplies an explanation: "These destroyers steam four points on each bow, about ¾-mile away. A submarine, to get into position for a good shot, must lie four points on the bow of the approaching vessel; the destroyer prevents this, and either forces the submarine to come between herself and the attacked vessel—in which case there is a very good chance of sinking her—or makes her take a long shot with a poor chance of hitting, and so give away her approximate position by the track of the torpedo. As a rule submarines let light cruisers and destroyers alone."

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from extreme ranges down to a thousand yards or so; March was the month for night firing and the investigation of fixed-sight methods; the April practice repeated January's, but assumed that all communications within the ship were destroyed and left full control to the gunlayers; in May there was broadside firing at many targets with several alterations of course; in June night firing without searchlights; in July divisional broadside firing; in August practice in picking up a target and firing without range-finders; in September controlled night firing at several targets; and in October the whole programme was begun again.

On the 13th of January, 1917, the whole Grand Fleet did its first fleet exercises under Admiral Beatty, for the most part in stormy and misty weather. Thus the flagship of the 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron reported afterwards that for an hour on the morning of the 14th the *Sydney* could not be seen, that signalling with searchlights was rendered difficult because heavy seas repeatedly broke over the apparatus, and that for the same reason only two of the flagship's guns could have been fought. Two destroyers returned to port on the evening of the 13th with badly damaged bridges, the rest on the 14th had to slow down to thirteen knots, and did not sight the Grand Fleet until after midday. The men, however, worked in high spirits, for they believed they were in chase of the German Fleet—the rumour went round that it would have been caught as in pincers by the Scapa and Rosyth divisions had it not bolted for harbour directly it heard British low-power wireless. On the 18th the *Sydney* took part in another submarine-hunt, along with the *Southampton* and ten destroyers (six with paravanes); on this occasion the *Southampton* had an officer and three men washed overboard —the *Sydney*, which was just astern, threw lifebuoys and did her best to lower boats, but the men sank quickly in the ice-cold water. Again on the 25th the *Sydney* (which seems to have had all the luck just then) went off with the *Dublin*, and the usual four destroyers, to patrol the Norwegian coast in the hope of catching the raider *V 69;* three Danish and two Norwegian vessels were examined, but no raider appeared.

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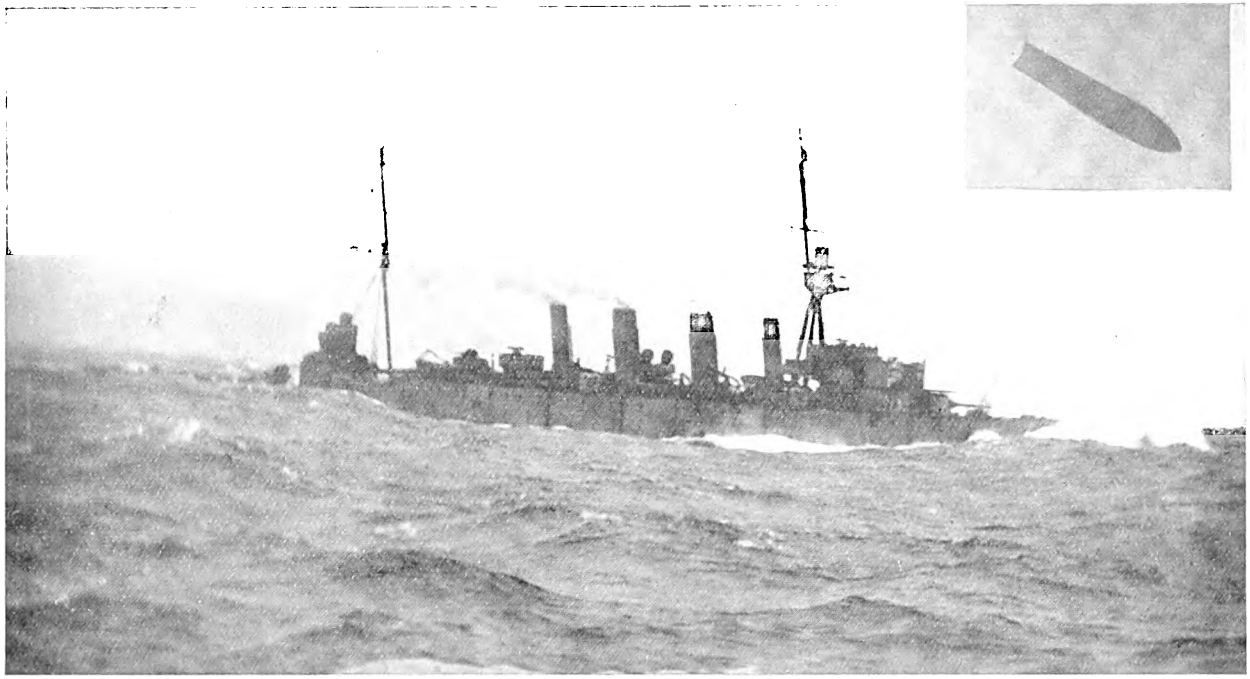

H.M.A.S. *Sydney* AT FULL SPEED IN A HEAVY SEA OFF THE DOGGER BANK

Inset: The Zeppelin *L 43* above the *Sydney* on the 4th of May, 1917.

Lent by Navy Office, Melbourne; Aust. War Memorial Collection No. A732.
Inset: Lent by Leading Signalman J. W. Seabrook (taken by Able Seaman G. Leahy); A.W.M. Collection No. A2576.

To face p. 293.

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About this time the *Melbourne's* engines developed defects which made it necessary to dock her at Birkenhead; she left Rosyth on the 27th of January, and was out of action until the 27th of June, strikes and holidays causing a good deal of delay. The *Sydney* had a comparatively quiet month—a Norway patrol in fairly good weather from the 10th to the 14th of February,[32] a mine-sweeping operation on the 17th, a dark-night patrol on the 23rd. On the 28th, however, a little more happened. The famous mine-layer *Abdiel* was sent into the Heligoland Bight to lay a mine-field, and simultaneously the *Sydney* and *Dublin* with their four destroyers went off in the same direction to sweep certain channels. About 1.30 p.m. on the 1st of March the *Abdiel* sighted a submarine attacking a British trawler, but as she started to the rescue the trawler blew up. At that moment the *Sydney* and *Dublin* appeared in the south-west, detached two destroyers to pick up the trawler's crew, and chased the submarine northwards without catching her; one report says that seaplanes assisted in the chase.[33] The submarine, however, was not content to escape, but about 3.30 p.m. attempted to torpedo the *Dublin,* which saw the torpedo only after it had passed astern of her. While the *Sydney* was praised for her action in the particular circumstances, she was also reminded by her superior officer that "The circumstances are limited in which light cruisers, even when supported by destroyers, can be justified in approaching without necessity the neighbourhood of a submarine."

The rest of March was uneventful, but on the 2nd of April Captain Dumaresq[34] took over the *Sydney* from Captain Glossop, and on the 5th she was able to boast that she had made "a record coaling for light cruisers—227.6 tons per hour." Two days later the whole light-cruiser squadron set forth to intercept a group of German "mine-bumpers" which was known to be interfering with the recently laid British

[32] This consisted of an attempt by the *Sydney* and *Southampton* and four destroyers to intercept enemy merchant ships or raiders off Stadlander. Numerous neutral vessels were intercepted; one (Swedish) boarded.

[33] Two trawlers were actually sunk, the *Herbert Ingram* of Boston and the *Redcap* of Hull. The former, which was sunk with a bomb, was the one sighted by the *Abdiel.*

[34] Rear-Admiral J. S. Dumaresq, C.B., C.V.O.; R.N. Commanded H.M.A.S. *Sydney,* 1917/19. Of Monckton Croft, Alverstoke, Hants, Eng.; b. Sydney, 26 Oct., 1873. Died 22 July, 1922.

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mine-field; but the enemy vessels somehow were warned, and nothing was accomplished except the sinking of a few German mines and the firing of one shot at a distant submarine. On the 18th yet another new job was found for the light cruisers; the *Sydney* and *Dublin,* with the airplane-carrier *Campania* and six destroyers, were ordered to proceed next day to the neighbourhood of Horn Reefs, where several Zeppelins were in the habit of patrolling every morning shortly after daylight. The ships were to reach their rendezvous at 5 a.m. on the 20th and at once send up aeroplanes from the *Campania* to scout for the Zeppelins. This enterprise, too, was a disappointment. A strong easterly wind—the one known veto on the Zeppelin patrol—sprang up about midnight on the 19th-20th, flying became impossible, and all that the expedition accomplished was the rescue of two trawlers' crews in difficulties with unseen submarines.

Dumaresq was a man of exceptional ability and vivid imagination—an originator, therefore, both of novel devices and of tactical ideas. When he joined the *Sydney* he was in the thick of a campaign for inducing the Admiralty to use light cruisers against the Zeppelins which were at the time infesting the North Sea area—a scheme which in the end involved the installation of launching-platforms for aeroplanes on the cruisers. Various experiments along these lines made the *Sydney's* next few months of service particularly interesting.

On the 3rd of May the *Sydney,* with the *Dublin* and four destroyers (*Nepean, Obdurate, Pelican, Pylades*), left Rosyth for a sweep along certain cleared channels between the mouths of the Forth and the Humber; three destroyers in line abreast did the sweeping with their anti-submarine paravanes, the cruisers and the *Obdurate* (whose paravanes were out of order) following. About 10 a.m. on the 4th the southward sweep was completed, and the six ships turned north-north-west towards Rosyth at eighteen-and-a-half knots. Five minutes later a small vessel was sighted eastwards, and the *Obdurate* was sent to examine her. At 10.25 a.m. the *Dublin* observed a Zeppelin (afterwards ascertained to be *L 43*) about seventeen miles away to the east, rapidly approaching the strange vessel; both cruisers promptly made for the enemy, opening fire on it at extreme range and ordering

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the three destroyers to cut their sweeps loose and follow in support. The *Obdurate,* meanwhile, had been attacked by a submarine just as she reached the suspected vessel, and at 10.30 sighted another about 1,000 yards away; she dropped two depth-charges near the first and one near the second, sighted the distant Zeppelin, and started independently in chase of it. As soon, however, as she got within four miles of it, it rose steeply and sheered off to the south-east.

The cruisers now had their turn. At 10.54 the *Dublin* saw the track of a torpedo passing ahead of her, at 11.12 a submarine, and at 11.15 another, which fired two torpedoes at her. At 11.20 she sighted a third, which she engaged with her guns and on which she dropped a depth-charge. Dumaresq (who was in command of the whole British force) came to the conclusion that he was being deliberately led into a submarine-infested area; recalling his companions, he resumed his original course to the north-north-west, at the same time signalling to the *Obdurate* to board the suspect from which she had been lured away—"if there is any presumption whatever of connection with Zeppelin and submarines, you are to sink her and take back crew with you."[35] Seeing the British ships in apparent retreat, the Zeppelin took heart and came after them. Dumaresq at once spread his ships, the cruisers maintaining their course, the *Pylades* making north-east to join the *Obdurate,* the *Pelican* and *Nepean* diverging south-west to get behind the airship, so that soon after noon it was technically "surrounded." At 12.10 the cruisers doubled back on their tracks, bringing the *L 43* within 7,000 yards' range at an elevation variously described as fifty degrees and eighty degrees, and opened fire. This angered the Zeppelin into a direct attack; making for the stern of the *Dublin,* and rising hastily as it flew, it endeavoured to attain a position vertically above the cruiser in order to drop bombs on her—an attempt which was foiled by the *Dublin's* hurried swerve to starboard. The Zeppelin thereupon flew above the *Obdurate* (which had completed her examination of the suspected vessel) and from a height of about 20,000 feet dropped three bombs within thirty feet of her, splinters coming aboard;

[35] She was in fact a Dutch fishing-vessel, to all appearance quite innocent. No traces were found of wireless or of pigeons, and apart from her crew she contained only salt and ice.

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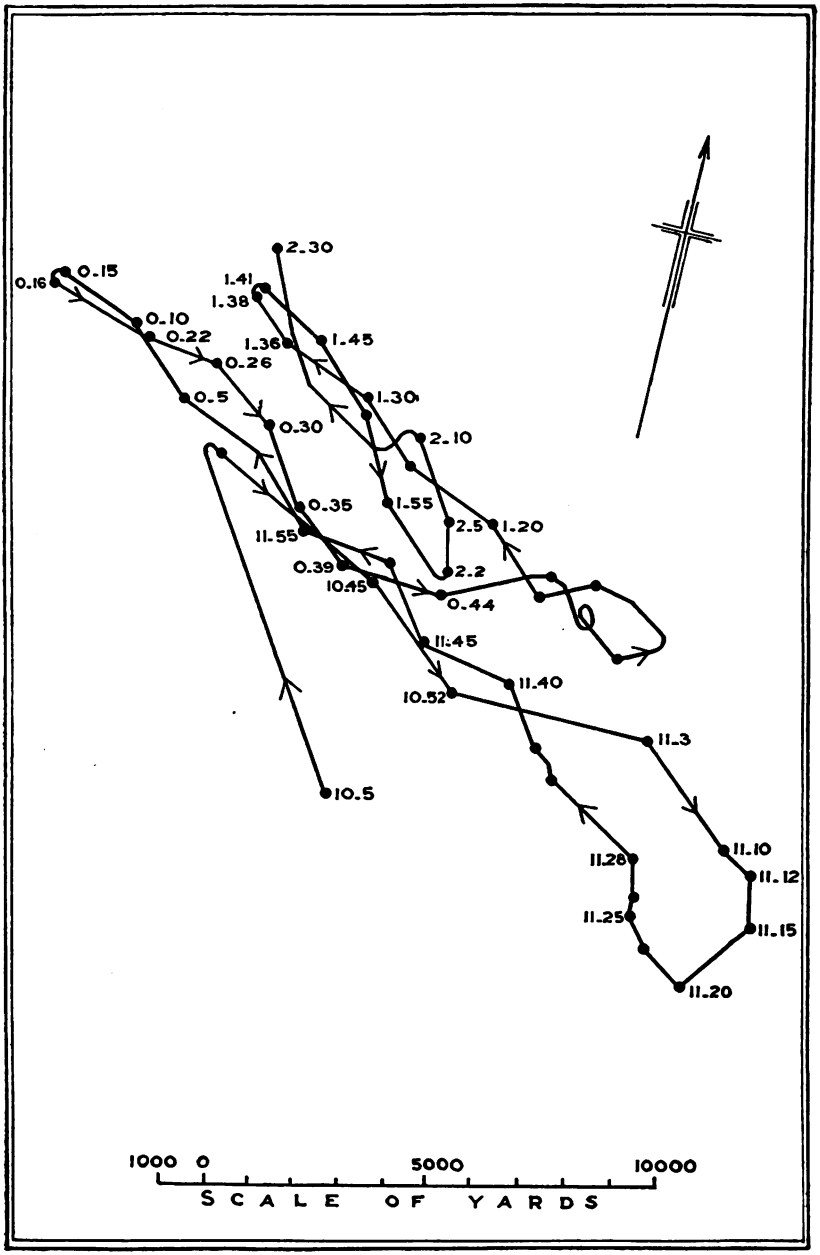
Map No. 21



WIGHTMAN

THE TRACK OF H.M.A.S. *Sydney* DURING HER FIGHT WITH *L 43* ON THE 4TH OF MAY, 1917

The small loop in the *Sydney's* course represents its sudden alteration when the first bombs were dropped by the airship.

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twenty minutes later it flew above the *Sydney* and dropped ten or twelve bombs,[36] six of them in two salvoes; then, the *Sydney* having used up all her anti-aircraft ammunition[37] and the *L 43* all its bombs, "the combatants," to quote an officer who was in the fight, "parted on good terms."[38] During the latter part of the fight *L 43* used its wireless vigorously, and a little before 1 p.m. another Zeppelin was seen far off in the north-east, but by 1.10 both had disappeared eastwards.[39]

This fight well illustrates the defects of the Zeppelin as an instrument of aggression. Airships can rise quickly and fly fast, but, compared with cruisers and destroyers, are slow in lateral steering; their plan of attack, therefore, when once an enemy ship is sighted, is to fly high out of range while observing her course and speed, and then, manœuvring into a position well astern of her, to catch her up and bomb her while flying directly above. Obviously the vertical height should not be too great, or bombing becomes a matter of chance. The attacked ship has two main defences—sudden alterations of course, especially when the airship is just about to get into bombing position, and steady anti-aircraft fire, which, though it has little chance of inflicting actual damage, compels the airship to keep to a great height. Dumaresq's method of fighting the *Sydney* was in accordance with these principles. In his report of the 5th of May he says:

> During the latter part of the action the *Sydney* manœuvred to prevent *L 43* from coming up astern, by keeping her on or before the beam, turning often, whereby *L 43* was obliged to drop her bombs while crossing *Sydney's* track. . . . The gunnery officers of *Sydney* and *Dublin* made very good shooting with the H.A. guns, thereby keeping the airship at such a height as to make her bomb-dropping inaccurate.

Back at Rosyth on the 5th of May, the *Sydney* now enjoyed nearly three weeks' comparative rest; only three exercises and a dark-night patrol are credited to her until,

[36] The cruisers and the Zeppelin were both moving at high speed, and the bombs were let go at moments just before the tracks of the combatants intersected. The accompanying map shows the course of the *Sydney* during the engagement, and the reader must envisage six of such tracks criss-crossing the sea while a not very dissimilar track was being woven 20,000 feet above.

[37] The *Sydney* fired chiefly shrapnel, the *Dublin* also high-explosive and other sorts. *Sydney* fired 69 shots, *Dublin* 90.

[38] An interesting and racy account of this action, furnished by an eyewitness, Mr. J. W. Seabrook, who at the time of the fight was a leading signalman and stationed on the bridge of the *Sydney*, is given in *Appendix No. 24*.

[39] Six weeks later the *L 43* was destroyed by naval forces in the North Sea.

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on the 25th, she was again despatched in search of Zeppelins. On this occasion she took along the *Dublin,* four destroyers, and the *Manxman*—a seaplane-carrier—picking up three more destroyers at an advanced base; the plan of operations was to reach about 9 a.m. on the the 26th a position half-way between Whitby and Heligoland, where an enemy submarine was known to be cruising and Zeppelins were expected. These latter were the objective, and unless they were sighted no seaplanes were to be flown. Nothing came of this elaborate scheme; no airships were seen, although a good deal of German wireless signalling was intercepted; not even the lure of a smoke-screen brought a Zeppelin over the horizon. For the time being Zeppelin-catching was off the programme, and the *Sydney* spent another month more or less peacefully between Rosyth and Scapa. A high-command memorandum of this period emphasises that light cruisers should adhere "to their principal functions, *viz.,* to obtain accurate and early information of position, composition, disposition, etc., of enemy." So, resuming her earlier duties, on the 29th of June she was one of four light cruisers which, with eight destroyers in attendance, patrolled the Norwegian coast (outside territorial waters) from The Naze north to Utsire Light above Stavanger. They examined eleven vessels, some of which were obviously anxious to avoid examination. Other patrols followed, on the 11th of July and on the 10th-13th of August, when the *Melbourne* also took part, having rejoined the squadron from Liverpool on the 29th of June and carried out during July a vigorous course of training to make up for lost time. The only abnormal event of these months was the blowing up of H.M.S. *Vanguard* in Scapa Flow about 11.30 p.m. on the 9th of July. The *Sydney* was at anchor about half-a-mile away, and her boats were the first on the scene, but only two survivors were picked up; the sea was covered with oil fuel, which luckily did not catch fire, but the explosion was so violent that very little débris remained. The cause of the explosion was never ascertained. Two of the *Sydney's* crew were aboard the *Vanguard* at the time, and perished in the disaster. After the August patrol it was decided to refit the *Sydney* at Chatham, whither she proceeded

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on the 24th. During her three months' stay there she witnessed, but did not suffer by, the air raid of the night of 2nd of September (which missed the dockyard but killed 132—chiefly sailors in the barracks—and wounded 96), and in the same month despatched her first draft of men on long leave to Australia.

Meanwhile the *Melbourne* had taken up her share in the persistent but unexciting routine of exercises and patrols,[40] and the autumn of 1917 bid fair to be a more monotonous repetition of that of 1916, when a sudden innovation in the German campaign against British merchantmen created a new task for the light cruisers. Up to the beginning of the unrestricted submarine campaign merchant vessels approaching Britain had been allowed to sail independently on tracks roughly laid down for them. When that campaign began, these tracks were more closely defined, and vessels were ordered to run to a time-table; for five days a certain track would be patrolled by destroyers, trawlers, and armed sloops; on the sixth no inward traffic was allowed; on the seventh another five-day period would begin along another patrolled track. As losses to the shipping of the Allies by submarine action grew—and they mounted rapidly, from 324,000 tons in January, 1917, to 870,000 in April—the uninstructed public began to clamour for a reintroduction of the convoy system which had proved effective in previous wars. Unfortunately a system perfectly capable of protecting a number of sailing ships against attack by enemy frigates which were also sailing ships, was not equally effective to protect a mass of slow steamers against fast raiders and submarines. The disadvantages of the convoy in modern warfare are fully discussed in Lord Jellicoe's *The Crisis of the Naval War;* here it suffices to say that, great as they were, and in spite of the serious deficiency of ships suitable for escort duties, it had

[40] In addition to the operations mentioned in this narrative, records available in Australia show that during 1917 Australian ships in the North Sea also took part in the following:

30-31 January. Sweep by 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron in conjunction with First and Second Battle Cruiser Squadrons and destroyers. One merchant ship intercepted.

15-16 March. Sweep by 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron. No incident.

28-30 December. 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron, covered by Second Battle Cruiser Squadron, covers the Lerwick-Holmengraa convoy. A torpedo was reported to have been fired at *Melbourne*. A Danish steamer tried to break away from the convoy; *Birmingham* turned it back.

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by March become necessary to convoy colliers between France and England. The trade between Scandinavia and Great Britain also was in urgent need of protection—partly because of its value to Great Britain, partly because it must be kept from Germany, but even more urgently because Scandinavian ships in all seas were then vitally necessary to the Allies, and they might have been withdrawn if steps had not been taken to protect them. Since the end of 1916 extra protection had been given on the Scandinavian route, outward-bound ships being escorted in daylight hours on part of their short voyage from Lerwick (in the Shetlands) to Norway. In March, 1917, a British naval vice-consul was established at Bergen, and ships bound for Great Britain were instructed by him to make the short passage between Bergen and Lerwick in such a way that they might meet the escort and return with it. This, at first, they seldom succeeded in doing. At the end of April, 1917, the Admiralty extended the arrangement, articulating it with a system of regular daily convoys escorted up and down the east coast of Great Britain.

The escorts of the Scandinavian convoys were, however, only sufficient to deal with submarines, and this trade route, unlike any of the others protected by Britain, lay through waters in which German surface-craft in force might have to be met. The enemy surface-forces were, however, not seen until mid-October, when a disaster occurred. During the afternoon of the 16th a convoy of twelve vessels bound for Britain left Bergen under escort of the destroyer *Mary Rose* and a trawler, the destroyer *Strongbow* and another trawler joining up later. Just after dawn on the 17th they were attacked by German light cruisers and destroyers; the British destroyers were sunk by the cruisers' fire, nine of the twelve merchantmen were also sunk; the trawlers did what rescue work was possible and managed to reach Lerwick, partly because the enemy ships feared interception by other British warships and went their way soon after 8 a.m. without completing their job. If the escort could have got a wireless message through to any of the four light-cruiser squadrons that were operating in the North Sea to southwards, the attacking force would probably have been

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caught; indeed, it was this practically constant presence of British cruisers along the enemy's line of retreat that had been relied on to prevent attacks on a convoy by surface ships.

For the future that reliance was impossible, and it became necessary to meet cruisers with cruisers. Accordingly, one or two cruisers were sent, whenever available, to patrol along the Lerwick-Bergen route and other protective measures—short of actually allotting a cruiser-escort—were taken. As early as the 21st of October the *Melbourne*[41] was engaged in a sweep for the protection of a convoy; and on the 8th of November she, with the other three cruisers of her squadron, and nine destroyers, took part in a complicated manœuvre designed to combine a patrol, an aerial reconnaissance of the Heligoland Bight, an attack on a flotilla of enemy mine-sweepers, and the protection of a convoy from Stavanger. Both these operations passed off normally, as did two similar cruises of the 17th of November and the 8th-11th of December; but on the 12th a Norway-bound convoy of six ships, escorted by two British destroyers and four trawlers, was attacked about midday by four enemy destroyers, and only a single British warship escaped destruction, the whole convoy being sunk. Two British armoured cruisers and four destroyers, intended to act as a covering force for a west-bound convoy as well as for the east-bound one, were not far away, and a message from the attacked escort recalled the destroyers in time to save a large number of lives but too late to intercept the Germans.

This new audacity called for a more thorough change of system. Indeed for some time past the old arrangement had in reality been almost unworkable, the winter gales rendering it impossible to keep the time-tables, and the harbours—especially Lerwick—becoming overcrowded. Accordingly, a new system was established by which the Scandinavian convoy assembled at Methil in the Firth of Forth, accumulating for several days from the coastal convoys, and then sailing as a very large convoy for the Norwegian coast. It was henceforth accompanied not merely by an anti-submarine escort, but by a squadron of cruisers or light cruisers, which met it off the Scottish coast, covered it till the inward-bound convoy

[41] Together with *Birmingham, Southampton, Dublin,* and destroyers.

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was sighted off Norway, and then guarded the latter back to Scotland.[42] The light cruisers being now definitely allotted to this duty, it became necessary at times to support them with the battle-cruisers, and to support these again with battleships. The result of this and other careful organisation was that, during 1918, the German surface-craft never once attacked the rich bait flung so temptingly across their jaws. In spite of all difficulties, in two years the losses of the Scandinavian convoy amounted to little over a third of one per cent of the ships escorted.

The *Sydney* was now back with the squadron, having rejoined it at Scapa on the 1st of December. The early records of 1918 are concerned with escort work, sometimes in company with a squadron of battle-cruisers, or occasionally with battleships, including those from the United States Navy which formed part of the Grand Fleet.[43] The conditions may be guessed from a report which states that, during escorting operations from the 6th to the 9th of January, "the bores of the guns in all ships were choked with ice and were out of action . . . until arrival in harbour." Meanwhile Dumaresq had attained his heart's desire, launching-platforms for aeroplanes having been fitted in the two Australian cruisers; the first flight off the *Sydney's* platform was made successfully on the 8th of December, 1917. Among other

[42] These convoys at first sailed every third day, but later every fourth or fifth, so that only one escort need be at sea at the same time; the Grand Fleet could not spare more.

[43] In addition to the operations mentioned in this narrative, records available in Australia show that during 1918 Australian ships in the North Sea also took part in the following:

Second Battle Cruiser Squadron.

18-21 February. With battleships and light cruisers, covering Scandinavian convoys.

6 March. With First Battle Cruiser Squadron and destroyers, covering mine-layers.

23 March and 26 April. With destroyers, covering east- and west-bound convoys.

25 April and 25-26 June. Supporting mine-layers.

29-30 July. Covering laying of American mines.

2nd Light Cruiser Squadron.

27 January to 1 February. Protecting east- and west-bound Scandinavian convoys.

18-21 February. Escorting (with battleships and battle-cruisers) a convoy from Kors Fjord westward, and then covering an eastward convoy. Heavy weather and snow squalls rendered difficult this operation.

8-12 March. Covering eastward bound convoy and returning with westward convoy. Operation much hampered by fog.

28 March. Protecting east- and west-bound convoys.

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incidents of this period the diary already quoted notes several attempts of the Grand Fleet to lure the Germans into the open. "We were off Heligoland," notes an entry for the 1st of February,

> letting rip with a 6-inch gun to let Fritz know we were there. The Grand Fleet was only about 12 miles off. Fritz was not having any.

On the 11th of April "Grand Fleet went out to sea on a spasm"; and on the 29th the 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron helped the 1st Battle Squadron—*Revenge, Resolution, Royal Oak, Royal Sovereign, Ramillies,* and *Canada,* a trumpet-call of great names—to escort to Norway a convoy of ninety-two vessels. The achievements of the German High Sea Fleet may have been few, but the work of their lighter vessels must be respected, seeing that it evoked so overwhelming a defence.

Both the *Melbourne* and the *Sydney* had by now aeroplanes of their own. The *Sydney's* launching-platform had been fitted up while she was at Chatham, and was inspected at Rosyth on her way back to Scapa (30th of November) "with a view to framing proposals for flying arrangements in other light cruisers." The *Melbourne* took aboard her flying officer, Flight-Lieutenant Gibson,[44] on the 14th of April, but does not seem to have experimented with the aeroplane till the 10th of May.

In June occurred an unexpected test of the Australian cruisers' aeroplane organisation. The now famous Harwich Force (nine light cruisers and twenty-eight flotilla leaders and destroyers) was at the time mainly occupied with reconnaissance work and the destruction of enemy mine-sweepers in and near the Heligoland Bight; consequently these mine-sweepers were being supported by German destroyers and light cruisers, with battleships—sometimes a division of them—within reach, and the whole area was patrolled by aeroplanes and Zeppelins. To test the strength of this support, and if possible to break it down or bring on a general engagement, Admiral Beatty planned a raid in force into the bight. The Harwich Force went off in advance, and was followed on the 1st of June by three detachments working

[44] Flight-Lieut. L. B. Gibson, R.A.F.

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along separate routes. The main body, with which alone this narrative is concerned, consisted of

(*a*) the 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron with four attendant destroyers;

(*b*) some miles behind, the aeroplane-carriers *Courageous* and *Glorious* with their destroyers; and

(*c*) the First Battle Cruiser Squadron, led by the *Lion*, with H.M.S. *Champion* and nine destroyers.

Thus if, to protect their smaller craft against the light cruisers, the enemy's battleships were tempted out of hiding, a superior British force could be launched against them unexpectedly—provided the German air-scouts did not first take back news of the big ships in the offing.

Late in the afternoon there suddenly appeared out of a sky covered with large broken clouds two enemy aeroplanes flying direct for the British fleet; they were not visible till almost overhead, passed the light cruisers, sighted the battle-cruisers, dropped five bombs in their neighbourhood, and at once made off eastwards to report what they had seen. The whole process, from their first appearance to their return over the light cruisers, took perhaps five minutes. But for such an emergency Dumaresq had long since prepared; the *Sydney's* pilot was continuously on duty close to his aeroplane, a bugle-call summoned the despatching crew, and the machine could be away within two minutes of giving the alarm (the *Melbourne*, of course, had similar arrangements). So, when the German aeroplanes returned, the machines from both Australian cruisers were in the air, climbing rapidly to intercept them. Unfortunately Flight-Lieutenant Gibson of the *Melbourne* lost sight of his opponent very soon through cloud-interference, and, observing Gibson's return, the *Courageous*, which had not yet launched an aeroplane, refrained from sending one up at all. But the *Sydney's* pilot, Flight-Lieutenant Sharwood,[45] followed his enemy persistently for sixty miles, in the end attaining a position "on its tail," and giving it several salvoes from his machine-gun. As it dropped in a spinning nose-dive through the mist, and Sharwood prepared to follow it and make quite certain that it had

[45] Flight-Lieut. (acting Captain) A. C. Sharwood, R.A.F.

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"crashed," he found another German machine just behind him and was compelled to rise again to fight; soon afterwards one of his guns ran out of ammunition and the other jammed, and he thought it wiser to make back towards home. After a long and unsuccessful search which used up his supply of petrol, he sighted two light cruisers and several destroyers, one of which fired at him; observing that they were British, he flew down and took the water ahead of a destroyer, which proved to be the *Sharpshooter*. The actual "landing" (if one may use that word in the absence of land) was bound to be difficult, as his type of machine usually turned a somersault when it struck the water, and threw its pilot out. Sharwood was a little more lucky. His machine merely stuck its nose deep into the sea and remained there, tail in air, while the contained air slowly bubbled out of it—and Sharwood hung on to the tail for twenty minutes, the destroyer eventually sending a boat for him. The *Canterbury* picked up his machine.

The achievement of the *Sydney's* aeroplane went practically unrecognised, the officer in command of the light cruiser squadrons having apparently taken it for granted that Sharwood had shared Gibson's bad luck. Further, Sharwood did not even get credit for having shot down an enemy machine, since he could not state that he had actually seen it fall into the water. But the operation—whether the German aeroplane was destroyed or not—was entirely successful. The German scouts were after bigger news than the presence of light cruisers or even battle-cruisers; they wanted to know whether the Grand Fleet was out—and in a few minutes more they would have known. Before, however, they had seen more than the *Lion* and her comrades (not an uncommon sight in those waters), the 'planes from the Australian ships were rising to intercept them, and they were forced to return in a hurry. On the other hand, had they neglected these two 'planes and gone on to find out what they were looking for, Sharwood and Gibson would have caught and probably destroyed them, or at any rate detained them so long that the *Courageous* could have sent hers to complete the work.

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Except for escorting a convoy to Bergen on the 18th-21st, the rest of June was uneventful, but on the 28th, it is recorded that half the *Sydney's* crew went down with "the Spanish 'flu." On the 9th of July, the already quoted diary declares, "we had a thunderstorm which brought down three balloons. Leading Stoker Matthews[46] was blown up out of a lower bunker," and died in hospital next day. On the 22nd another convoy had to be escorted, and on the 8th and 18th of August the squadron was detailed to support a flotilla of United States mine-layers. On the 23rd-27th the two operations were combined; a large convoy was escorted to Bergen, a return convoy was met at 7 p.m. on the 25th, and at 7 a.m. on the 27th the light cruisers were switched off from escort duty to guard mine-layers. Nothing of importance happened, but the operation is mentioned to illustrate the accumulation of duties that kept the cruisers busy. September was on the whole an easy month, and the *Sydney* snatched twelve days' leave out of it; the *Melbourne's* occupations may be summarised by way of defining "easy":

3rd. Carried out exercises in Scapa Flow: flew aeroplane.
5th. Carried out exercises in Scapa Flow: flew aeroplane.
9th. Proceeded with *Yarmouth* on convoy duty.
10th. Off Norwegian coast.
12th. Anchored in Kirkwall Bay, and later in Scapa.
16th. Carried out full calibre night-firing in Pentland Firth.
17th. Carried out exercises in Flow.
19th. Proceeded with squadron on convoy duty.
20th. Off Norwegian coast.
23rd. Returned to Scapa.
26th. Left Scapa with squadron.
27th. Arrived Rosyth.
30th. Left with squadron, but had only gone a short way outside when recalled.

The *Sydney* took part in the last-mentioned operation, and the diary notes it thus:

The Fleet got a sudden spasm; we coaled ship . . . and proceeded to sea with coal on our decks. We fully expected to meet *something*, but after about two hours' run we were recalled.

[46] Leading Stoker C. W. Matthews (O.N. 8558; R.N.). Of Ware, Herts., Eng.; b. Bishops Stortford, Herts., 11 Jan., 1889. Died 10 July, 1918.

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October's record is purely of coaling, except for two days' squadron exercises and one dark-night patrol. And then, on the 11th of November, came the Armistice:

> Admiral Beatty sent a signal to the Grand Fleet to splice the main brace. A tot of rum was served out to the ship's company, the first time since the ship commissioned. Fireworks display and all kinds of whistles—in fact, anything that a sound could be got out of was under way.

The third Australian light cruiser—the *Brisbane,* which was in building when the war began, and was not commissioned until the 31st of October, 1916—had a far less adventurous and nomadic career, but was just as useful in a less conspicuous fashion. Even before she was commissioned, she was in request. In October of 1915 the Admiralty asked the Naval Board (another instance of the tactfulness which has been referred to in an earlier chapter[47]) whether it had any objection to the employment of the *Brisbane* in the Mediterranean on commissioning. This seemed a premature request, since the ship was unlikely to be ready in less than six months; but the Commonwealth Government instantly replied that it would be glad to send her, when completed, "on such service as Admiralty think most necessary for defence of the Empire." Accordingly, on the 12th of December, 1916, she left Port Jackson for the Mediterranean by way of Singapore, and on arrival at Malta was docked for two months to be fitted with various new devices, which, having been invented during the war, were not available in Australian dockyards. Before, however, she could be set to any real work in the Mediterranean, it became apparent that enemy raiders were at work in the Indian Ocean,[48] and she was forthwith despatched to that area; there for some months she scoured the seas in vain, but obtained useful experience of seaplane work, having at Colombo taken aboard one which made two flights daily for some weeks. In June, 1917, she was sent back to Australia to take over coastal patrol work, since the destroyer flotilla had been sent to the Mediterranean and the *Encounter* was escorting troopships between New Zealand and Colombo. As this involved her detachment from the East Indies Squadron, with which she had been

[47] *Page 8.* [48] *See chap. xi.*

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working in the Indian Ocean, her seaplane (which was for the use of the squadron) was taken away—a loss afterwards much regretted.[49] From June to September she patrolled the western coast of Australia, but at the end of September was hastily ordered to the Solomons in consequence of the appearance of another raider in the Pacific.[50] After visiting Nauru, Ocean Island, and the Gilbert group, she returned to Sydney early in 1918, and was employed for several months on patrol work along the eastern coast. Then, about the middle of August, the Naval Board came to the conclusion that so useful a ship was wasted on mere coastal patrols, and proposed that—if a less powerful ship could be spared from the China or the East Indies Squadron to replace her—she should be sent to an English dockyard to receive "the large number of fittings of an advanced kind required in connection with her general gunnery work." The Board's suggestion was that she should proceed to England by way of the Panama Canal, showing the flag at various island groups on the way; when fully fitted, "she would either return to Australia, or be employed on active war service in European seas as may seem best in the Admiralty's judgment." The proposal was cabled to London on the 24th of August, and after due consideration the Admiralty on the 13th of September replied that no ship could be spared to relieve the *Brisbane,* but in view of the then existing situation none was required, and her gear was awaiting her in England. This new proposal—to despatch her without obtaining a substitute—involved consultation with the Commander-in-Chief on the China Station; one of his ships, the Japanese *Nisshin,* which was at the moment patrolling off Fremantle, was required on that station early in October, and the departure of the *Brisbane* for Europe would make it impossible to provide a relief for her. However Vice-Admiral Tudor[51] was willing to leave the southern end of the Colombo-Fremantle route unguarded. These preliminaries being settled, on the 3rd of October the *Brisbane* was formally offered by the Commonwealth Government to the Imperial authorities for service

[49] *See p. 372.*

[50] See *chap. xi* for a fuller account of these operations.

[51] Admiral Sir Frederick Tudor, K.C.B., K.C.M.G.; R.N. C.-in-C. China Station, 1917/19. Of Devonshire, Eng.; b. Stoke, Devonport, Eng., 29 March, 1863.

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abroad; and on the 11th the Admiralty asked that she should be sent *viâ* Suez, "as events in the eastern Mediterranean make an increase of strength there very desirable at the present time." When matters were more settled there, she would proceed to the English dockyard for refit. On the 21st of October she left Sydney, reached Mudros on the 26th of November, spent about a month in company with the destroyer flotilla, and towards the end of December proceeded to England to be brought up to date.

III

For nearly two years, it will be remembered, the destroyer flotilla[52] was employed partly in patrols off the Australian coast, partly in preventing the development of enemy activities in the Malay Archipelago. When, however, the German submarine campaign began to threaten seriously the continuance of oversea trade with Britain, it was soon found necessary to bring them into more active service.

On the 9th of May, 1917, the British Government sent to Australia an urgent request for the *Warrego, Parramatta,* and *Yarra,* which were at the moment on the Australian patrol:

> Serious situation created by submarine menace compels His Majesty's Government ask your Government whether they will agree. . . . In pressing this proposal on Ministers you should explain that His Majesty's Government trust they will appreciate that it has not been put forward without very full consideration, and that it has only been made because in the opinion of the Admiralty situation renders it necessary.

The almost apologetic nature of this message, practically asking for the loan of ships which were already under Admiralty control, is another instance of the British Government's anxiety to avoid even a shadow of friction with the dominions. But it is further accounted for by the fact that in the preceding February the Naval Board had sent the Admiralty a statement[53] showing how unprotected were the Australian coastal routes against enemy action. In January a German raider had been reported in the Atlantic: there were credible rumours of a German plot to establish a sub-

[52] The extracts from two private diaries given in *Appendix No. 22* afford a more detailed account of the work of the destroyers.

[53] This is dealt with more fully in *chap. xi.*

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marine base somewhere in Malaysia; and all the protection that Australia had was the *Encounter* patrolling off the Leeuwin and the three destroyers between Bass Strait and Jervis Bay. The Board had insisted that there was no panic, no feeling of danger, no desire to ask for more protection; but in view of their statement of the situation it was obviously advisable to put forward very good reasons for withdrawing half the protection there was.

The response was cordial. On the 12th the Australian Government "gladly agreed" to the despatch of the three destroyers, and even hinted at the despatch of the three others —*Swan, Torrens, Huon*—which were at the time based on Singapore. But the Board was still (and rightly) afraid of raiders, and suggested that an extra cruiser or two might be allotted to coastal patrol work. The Admiralty took the hint at once:

> Inferred from your cypher telegram of 12th May . . . that Commonwealth Government ready to permit three other destroyers . . . to be sent to European waters on the understanding that British cruiser made available for Australian waters in addition to *Encounter*. Such a proposal would be welcomed. Is attitude of the Government correctly interpreted?

It was. The enterprise was put in hand immediately. The first division (the three destroyers in Australian waters) refitted at Sydney early in June; the second (the three in Malaysia) docked and refitted at Singapore; the *Esturia*, which had been acting as parent ship to those in Malaysia, was taken over by the Admiralty, and sent to Parry Harbour to oil the first division, which proceeded from Sydney north-about, visited Portuguese Timor on the 21st of June, met the *Esturia* on the 26th, and reached the Cocos group on the 28th. There on the 7th of July arrived the second division from Singapore, and Commander Warren of the *Parramatta* took command of the flotilla; but the anchorage did not favour oiling in rough weather, and the divisions were unable to sail together. The first division therefore sailed on the 8th, the second on the 10th; they rejoined at Diego Garcia on the 15th, and carried out a careful search in the archipelago for survivors of two British vessels (the *Jumna* and *Wordsworth*) which had disappeared earlier in the year and might have been wrecked there. No traces of wrecks or castaways

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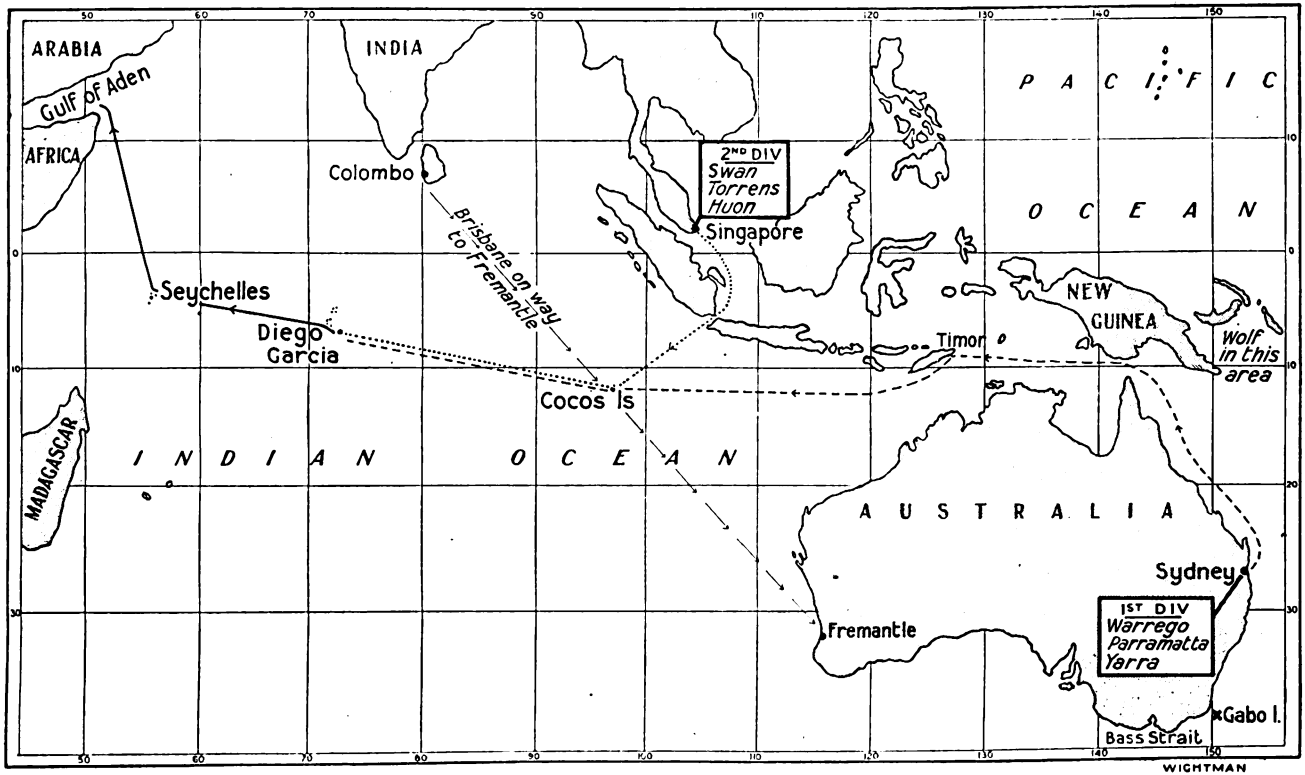

TRACKS OF THE AUSTRALIAN DESTROYER FLOTILLA ON ITS WAY TO THE MEDITERRANEAN

Map No. 23

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could be found, and the flotilla proceeded *viâ* the Seychelles to Aden, which was reached on the 28th. Here the *Esturia* was detached to take in oil at Abadan in the Persian Gulf, while the destroyers on the 3rd of August passed into the Red Sea and by the 9th were at Port Said.

On the 12th came Admiralty orders to proceed to Malta, where a course of training for their new duties would be entered upon. But practical experience was to come first. A large number of merchant vessels lay at Port Said, and the flotilla was given leave to escort them. The *Swan* and *Warrego* having been detached to escort a transport from Alexandria to Malta, the other four ships took their convoy uneventfully to within a hundred miles of Malta. Then, at noon on the 16th, the *Parramatta's* look-out saw the wash of a periscope north-eastwards. She chased it at full speed, saw "the wake of some large object moving under the surface of the water," ran ahead of the wake, and dropped a depth-charge. There was a heavy explosion, a sudden vision of part of a submarine's hull, and an upward stream of bubbles and oil that lasted nearly fifteen minutes. Almost at the same time the *Torrens* sighted a periscope southwards, and chased it, firing three rounds from her 4-inch gun as she went; but this enemy disappeared apparently undamaged. The effect of this small action on the flotilla was great. After the weary years of tropical patrol, so important in reality but so meaningless to the crews engaged in it, here was active service indeed, actual fighting, a hard hit at a definite enemy. From that time forth, it is believed, no man in the flotilla hankered after land service.

On the 21st the flotilla was reunited in Valetta harbour, and refitting began. It was decided to base the Australian destroyers on Brindisi and use them for the patrol at the mouth of the Adriatic Sea, where the flotilla of almost-defenceless British "drifters" had during May been raided by an Austrian squadron, which sank fourteen of them in a single action. Accordingly from the 15th to the 20th of September the *Swan, Warrego,* and *Yarra* did their gunnery and torpedo exercises off Corfu; from the 24th to the 27th of September the *Parramatta, Huon,* and *Torrens* did theirs. From the 6th to the 9th of October the whole flotilla carried

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out combined exercises (mainly because torpedoes of a new type had just been received); and on the 14th the actual patrol work began, each division working for four days at sea and taking four days for rest and repairs in harbour. Even during the preliminary training there had been real work to do. On the 20th of September the three ships then at Malta had to race away northwards to the help of a convoy which was being attacked by submarines; one vessel was sunk before they arrived, but the rest were brought safely to Valetta. On the 5th of October, as the flotilla was on its way to Corfu, a submarine was sighted; it was disguised as a schooner, and promptly proceeded to submerge without taking in sail. The flotilla raced for it, and the *Swan* dropped a depth-charge where it had disappeared, but next day a transport loaded with Italian troops was sunk in the neighbourhood with great loss of life. During the flotilla's return to Taranto on the 9th of October the transport *Briton,* carrying British reinforcements for the Italian front, was picked up and escorted into harbour.

The object of the Adriatic patrol was quite different from those of either the Malaysian or the North Atlantic patrols described in previous chapters. There was no trade to be protected, no merchant vessel to be searched, no enemy plotter to be thwarted or intercepted. The enemy's warships formed the sole objective. For—as a glance at the map will show—the Adriatic itself was for all practical purposes an enemy naval preserve. Between Brindisi and Venice there is no Italian harbour worth consideration; but at the head of the sea lies Pola, the Austrian naval headquarters, and along its eastern shore first a maze of islands behind which squadrons and flotillas could assemble in safety, and then two ports—Cattaro at the southern end of Dalmatia, and the Albanian Durazzo, at this time occupied by Austrian forces—which afforded excellent bases for enemy naval action. From these three ports (Pola, Cattaro, Durazzo), in all probability, issued the majority of the submarines that infested the Mediterranean. British policy was all against remaining on the defensive, and, by merely convoying merchant ships, allowing the enemy submarines to come and go with impunity except at the moment when they attacked. The system adopted in

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1916 of patrolling traffic-routes proved worse than useless; unless the route was practically lined with protecting vessels, the patrols merely indicated to enemy submarines where the traffic was to be found. The most effective defence was to attack the submarines at their bases; yet the limited forces available in that quarter made it impossible either to attack or to blockade any of the three ports from which the enemy issued. The best that could be done was to institute some form of blockade in the mouth of the Adriatic, since through that mouth he must come.

This policy was strongly urged by a conference of naval officers of the Allies held at Corfu in April, 1917. Great Britain had already for some time maintained across the Otranto straits a line of net drifters, light fishing vessels furnished with nets and eventually also with depth-charges, small-calibre guns,[54] and hydrophones by means of which they could roughly ascertain a submarine's position. Spread out in two or three parallel lines across the forty-mile wide Strait of Otranto, they might possibly on occasion and with luck intercept in their nets a submarine. But they were very much at the mercy of any Austrian warship, big or small, that might come along; and, in view of the disastrous result of the latest raid upon them, the value of their work, as long as they were unsupported, hardly justified the risks they ran. Commodore Heneage,[55] who commanded the British naval force in the Adriatic, had therefore asked for support in some form, and was given the Australian destroyers. The basic idea of the patrol was this—that a submarine cannot travel submerged for an indefinite time, but must after a few hours come to the surface to recharge its batteries; if therefore an enemy submarine could be espied and forced below water by an advance-guard of destroyers, it could be, so to speak, handed over to the drifters while still submerged, and be either sunk by depth-charges or forced to emerge and destroyed by gun-fire. The destroyers were therefore set to patrol an area in the narrows east of Otranto and just north

[54] Trawlers were largely used in the war for mine-sweeping; drifters, a lighter class of fishing craft, for entangling enemy submarines in their nets. Many drifters were armed only with rifles.

[55] Admiral A. Walker-Heneage-Vivian, C.B., M.V.O.; R.N. Of Clyne Castle, Blackpill, Swansea, Wales; b. Beacon Lodge, Christchurch, Hants, Eng., 4 Feb., 1871.

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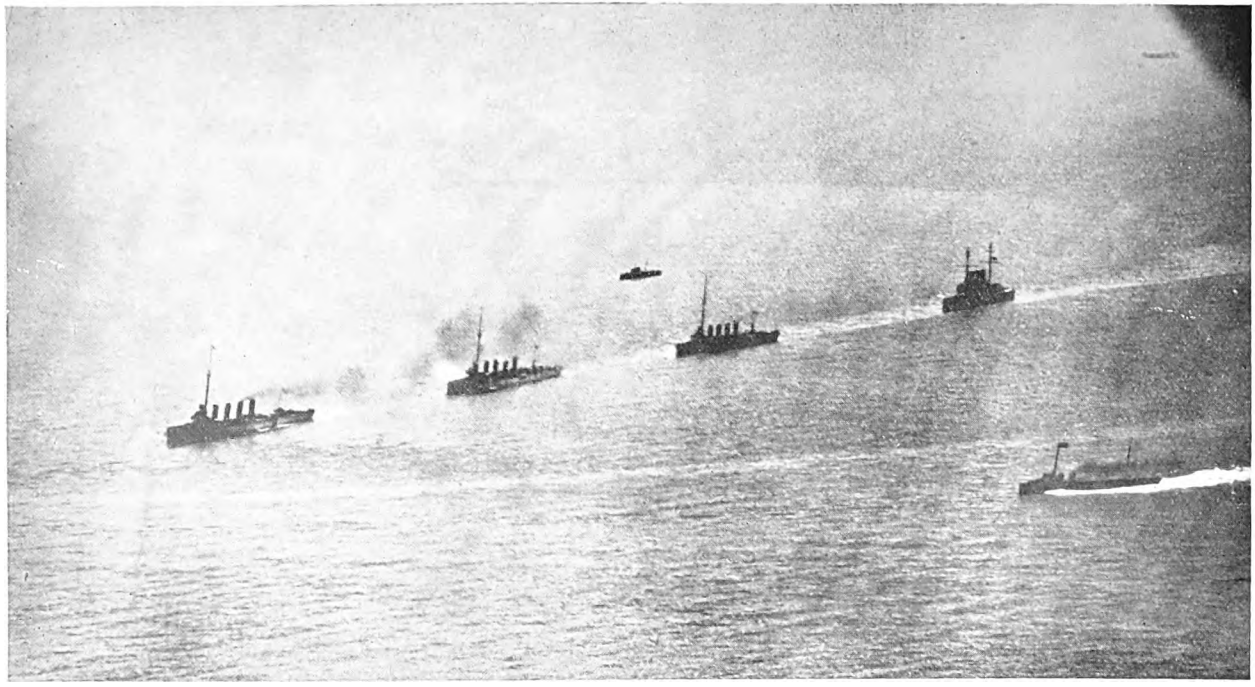

AUSTRIAN WARSHIPS RETURNING AFTER THEIR RAID ON THE ADRIATIC DRIFTERS, MAY 1917

German Official Photograph.

To face p. 316.

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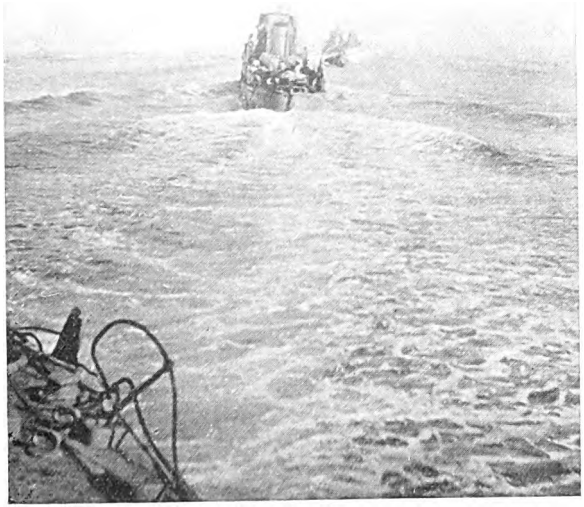
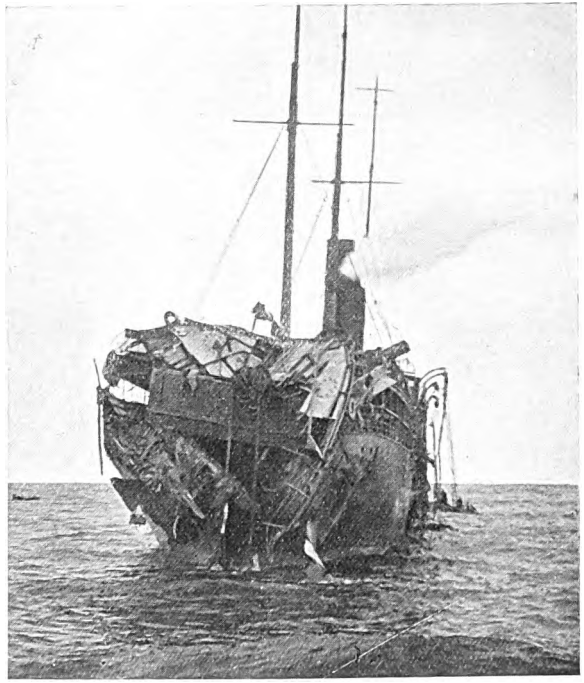


AUSTRALIAN DESTROYERS RETURNING TO BRINDISI AT THE END OF A PATROL IN THE ADRIATIC, AUGUST 1918

Lent by C.E.R.A. J.M. Benjamin, R.A.N.
Aust. War Memorial Collection No. EN278.



THE TORPEDOED ITALIAN TRANSPORT *Orione*

(See also *Volume XII, plate 26.*)

Aust. War Memorial Collection No. EN300.

To face p. 317.

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of 40° N. lat.; the drifters cruised in a belt farther south, usually from ten to twenty miles away, so that they would have ample notice of any enemy attack on or above the surface. Of such an attack the destroyers must bear the brunt—and there were many chances of one, since the Austrian ships were more numerous, more heavily armed, and swifter than ours, their aircraft were busy and adventurous, and they had a habit of setting afloat drifting mines whenever a north-east wind was blowing. Nor was the destruction of a submarine easy, even when located and surrounded: for depth-charges (which carried either 120 or 300 lb. of T.N.T.[56]) really did little damage unless they exploded quite close to the attacked vessel, although the concussion might affect the morale of the crew.[57] A certain amount of valuable assistance was rendered by British and Italian seaplanes from Otranto when submarines were sighted: and there was an important observation-post on Saseno Island, in the entrance to Valona Bay. On the other hand, it was known that the enemy had permanent submarine patrols off Brindisi and Valona.

Basing his flotilla on Brindisi, Warren arranged that each division should work four days on patrol and four days in harbour;[58] Bond with the *Swan, Huon,* and *Torrens* accordingly proceeded to the barrage line on the 14th, and these were replaced on the 18th by the *Warrego, Parramatta,* and *Yarra.* The nature of their work will be clear from the following patrol reports:—

The speeds used during the day were from 14 to 16 knots, by night 12 to 14. . . . Between noon and 1 o'clock on Thursday, 18th October, two floating mines were sighted and sunk by *Swan* and *Huon.* . . . No sign of enemy vessels or submarines was seen whilst on patrol, but a report was intercepted from Drifter *P 1* stating that she was chasing a submarine. . . .

[56] Trinitrotoluene or trinitrotoluol.

[57] "Taking the depth-charge with 300 lb. weight of explosive, ordinarily supplied to destroyers in 1917, it was necessary to explode it within 14 feet of a submarine to ensure destruction; at distances up to about 28 feet from the hull the depth-charge might be expected to disable a submarine to the extent of forcing her to the surface, when she could be sunk by gunfire or rammed, and at distances up to 60 feet the moral effect on the crew would be considerable and *might* force the submarine to the surface." (Jellicoe's *The Crisis of the Naval War, p. 61.*)

[58] Of the three in harbour two were always ready to go out at half-an-hour's notice. On patrol during daylight the destroyers usually cruised in line abreast, about a mile apart: at night the formation was in single line ahead, two or three cables apart. At night floating mines were frequently encountered, and destroyed by gun-fire. For repairs, etc., the flotilla was attached to the 8th Light Cruiser Squadron (H.M.Ss. *Lowestoft, Weymouth, Dartmouth, Gloucester, Newcastle, Liverpool*), each ship looking after one destroyer. In the event of an attack by enemy surface-ships, the flotilla was to act as a screen to the cruisers.

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Friday 19th. At 7.30 a.m sighted two dark-grey, pearshaped objects that looked like floating mines, but of no recognised type: sank them with Maxim-fire When shells were pierced with bullets they exuded a discoloured oily matter. . . .

Sunday 21st. At 12.37 p.m. received W/T message from *Weymouth* re submarine passing Saseno Island. Destroyers at the time were searching between Fano and Saseno Islands. At 1 p.m. observed oily track going south, turned into track and followed at full speed, after about 2 miles track suddenly disappeared: dropped depth-charge, no visible result. Division searched in the vicinity for some hours, assisted by two aeroplanes. . . . Small wreckage constantly passed during the day, including painted boards and one small broken mast. . . . Intercepted enemy messages have been forwarded.[59]

During the early months of these operations a patrol seldom passed without an enemy submarine being discovered and chased;[60] as time went on, however, the enemy was more rarely sighted. The powerful Austrian destroyers only once —seven months after the arrival of the Australian flotilla— succeeded in inflicting serious damage on the patrol. The contingency had of course been prepared for, and—as it was assumed that any raiding force would be superior to the patrol —the standing orders were to report the enemy as soon as sighted, and then to turn south so as to lead him away from his base. At the same time a wireless call was to be sent to the commander-in-chief in Brindisi informing him of the type of enemy vessels sighted and of their dispositions, so that his forces might rush out of Brindisi and intercept them. If, however, the enemy refused to be tempted farther from his base, and appeared likely to attack the drifters or to retire, the destroyers were at once to turn and attack.

The raid in question occurred on the night of 22nd of April, 1918. The patrol had by then, as will be later explained, been greatly strengthened by the arrival of a French and of a British flotilla. On this night it comprised four British, one Australian, and one French destroyer, and was disposed in three subdivisions, each consisting of two destroyers and

[59] The diaries quoted in *Appendix No. 22* provide a more detailed account of the flotilla's experiences.

[60] As an illustration of the coolness of the young Australian in action, it may be mentioned that, while the *Torrens* with some other destroyers was chasing an Austrian submarine, and the guns' crews, stripped to the waist, were engaged in rapid fire, the breechworker of the 4-inch semi-automatic gun on the forecastle accidentally received the recoil of the gun full in the face, and was hurled, covered with blood and apparently dead, on the deck. Without a moment's hesitation a boy named Albert Brandon (of Fremantle, W. Aust.), newly joined from the *Tingira*, turned him over, unbuckled his tube-belt, buckled it on himself, and took his place as breechworker, where he remained during the rest of the chase.

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patrolling a ten-mile stretch.[61] The sky was cloudless with a crescent moon and a still sea, when, about 9.30 p.m., in the direction of the western subdivision—*Jackal* and *Hornet*—gun-flashes were seen, and, shortly afterwards, the silhouettes of Austrian ships.[62] Judging from the intensity of the fire, *Comet* had at 9.39 reported "cruisers, probably hostile, in sight," and with *Torrens* had turned away to southward, at the same time sending an order to the other subdivisions to close up and fall in astern. As, however, the Austrians showed no intention of following, and *Jackal* and *Hornet* were heavily engaged,[63] *Comet* turned again and gave the order to chase.[64] The five Austrian destroyers could have sunk the British in detail; they did not, however, wait to inform themselves, but, having fired sharply on *Jackal* and *Hornet*, turned and made for home, with *Jackal* following on their port quarter, and *Comet* and *Torrens* (with *Alarm* and *Cimiterre* endeavouring to come up astern) on their starboard quarter.

Now was the opportunity for the light cruisers to steam out and intercept the enemy. Unfortunately, with almost their first shots, the Austrians had wrecked the upper works of both *Hornet* and *Jackal*. The foremast of one and the mainmast of the other were brought down, putting their wireless out of action and preventing them from communicating with Brindisi. The bridge of the *Hornet* was swept and her rudder jammed, so that she could steam only in circles. The British captain, with both arms shattered, remained at his post, but she dropped out of the chase. *Jackal*, however, held on, firing with her bow gun, and about 12.45 a.m. was joined by *Comet* and *Torrens*. The enemy was drawing ahead all the time. About 1 a.m. *Comet* developed engine-room trouble, but *Torrens* with *Jackal* continued the chase, the other destroyers being then two miles astern. The

[61] On this occasion the destroyers were disposed as follows. *Jackal* and *Hornet* were patrolling the western ten-miles, *Comet* and *Torrens* the centre, and *Cimiterre* (French) and *Alarm* the eastern. *Lizard* and *Larne* were attached to the Corfu division of the Barrage Destroyer Force. *Redpole, Rifleman, Warrego, Swan,* and *Acorn* were in Brindisi.

[62] The details of this attack are taken partly from an article by Alec Jeffrey in the Sydney *Sunday Times*, partly from the official records.

[63] *Jackal* and *Hornet* on first sighting the enemy destroyers—five in number—had turned towards them to ascertain their nationality. As no answer was made to the challenge and the strangers opened fire, *Jackal* and *Hornet* turned, but were hit when turning.

[64] The action of the whole patrol was afterwards commended as having been correct throughout the operation.

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light cruisers had been called up, and a number of destroyers—including *Warrego* and *Swan*—were putting out from Brindisi. But word had arrived too late. About 3 a.m., when *Torrens* was not far from Cattaro, a recall signal reached the chasing vessels. *Hornet* had 6 killed and 15 wounded; *Jackal* 3 killed and 7 wounded. No other ship had been touched, and the damage, if any, to the Austrians is not known.

There were frequent rumours of Austrian activity, and the British force at Brindisi, whose tradition was to take the offensive, was frequently straining on the leash; but, when on the 9th of June, 1918, two Austrian battleships and escorting destroyers moved from their shelter with the intention of making a more powerful attack upon the barrage, it was a couple of Italian motor-boats under Commander Rizzo which had the luck to find them, and succeeded, without assistance, in sinking the battleship *Svent Istfan*. In consequence of this fine feat, the intended Austrian attack was abandoned.

To return to the early days of the patrol. Although the general direction of the naval forces of the Allies in the Mediterranean lay with the French Commander-in-Chief, it had been recognised that the anti-submarine campaign must be controlled by a single staff, and a British commander-in-chief had in August, 1917, been appointed to control it.[65] The Italians never consented to "pool" their anti-submarine craft with those of their allies, but the French did; and, about two months after the inception of the patrols by the Australian destroyers, a French flotilla was brought in, and thenceforth there were four ships on patrol and two in harbour, every fourth patrol being carried out entirely by French ships. This gave the Australians every now and then twelve clear days at the base—none too long a time for cleaning boilers and effecting small repairs.[66] The wear and tear on machinery was very great, especially on the steering gear,

[65] This measure had been recommended by a British naval conference held at Malta in February 1917, and by the conference of delegates of the Allies at Corfu in April.

[66] During these intervals there were observable in the Australian crews some of the same qualities which marked Australian soldiers everywhere. Air raids by the Austrians were fairly frequent and an alarm signal had been arranged, upon the sounding of which everyone was to take cover. This precaution the Australian crews invariably neglected, in spite of all reasons—military and other—to the contrary, amusing themselves by standing on deck and betting upon various incidents of the raid. In such practices—as at Anzac—they were abetted by the crews of the British destroyers.

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which suffered much from the constant zigzagging. The *Torrens,* indeed, had in mid-December to be detached to Malta for a more thorough overhauling, as her turbines had stripped and her steering gear was in parts almost worn out.[67]

Besides blocking the southward passage of enemy submarines, the flotilla was also partly responsible for ensuring the safe transit of Italian transports carrying troops to and from Albania.[68] As a rule these vessels were strongly escorted, and enemy attacks on them were few and far between. But on the 16th of November, 1917, the *Parramatta,* patrolling in company with the *Warrego, Huon,* and *Yarra,* intercepted at about 11 a.m. an S.O.S. call from the north, proceeded at full speed in that direction, and at noon found the Italian transport *Orione* with her stern blown completely off by an enemy torpedo. She had about 400 troops and a number of wounded aboard to begin with, but a large number of the troops were in the water a moment after the torpedo hit her, and the Australians' first task was to rescue a mass of swimmers. The *Warrego* went alongside the transport to take off the rest of the troops and the crew: when this was safely accomplished (and a rising sea made the task none the easier), the *Warrego* made straight for Brindisi; the *Huon*—which had most of the swimmers aboard, and received others from the *Parramatta*—was sent thither at dusk, the *Parramatta, Yarra,* and a French destroyer which had come up later, standing by the *Orione.* Lieutenant Cyril Hill,[69] Engineer-Lieutenant Bridge,[70] and Signalman Varcoe[71] (all from the *Parramatta*) were put aboard the transport to report whether she could be salved; on their assurance her master and several volunteers from her crew went back aboard her, and the *Parramatta* took her in tow, signalling by wireless for a tug. But the enemy submarine was still on the watch, and discharged a second torpedo while

[67] The photograph of the Australian flotilla reproduced as *plate 25 of Vol. XII* was taken during the absence of the *Torrens,* and includes the British destroyer *Alarm.*

[68] The *Huon* and *Warrego* were also in January, 1918, employed in carrying the Greek Premier Venizelos and his suite from Taranto to Athens on his return from a conference of the Allies in London.

[69] Lieut.-Commr. C. J. P. Hill, R.N. Of Shrewsbury, Shropshire, Eng.; b. Belvedere, Kent, Eng., 14 Feb., 1884.

[70] Engr.-Commr. C. W. Bridge, R.A.N. Of Sydney; b. North Sydney, 18 Jan., 1890.

[71] Leading Signalman J. W. Varcoe, D.S.M. (O.N. 3059; R.A.N.) Of Sydney and Dubbo, N.S.W.; b. Baker's Swamp, N.S.W., 20 July, 1897.

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the tow-line was being secured. She then broke surface and dived again directly beneath the *Parramatta*. The *Yarra* was sent to chase her, but could do nothing, so returned and aided the *Parramatta* in towing.

At 5.30 p.m. the Italian tug *Marritimo* appeared, and the two Australian destroyers went back to their patrol, leaving the *Orione* (with Hill's party still aboard) to be escorted to port by French and Italian destroyers. During the night a gale sprang up, and Warren decided to pick up the transport again in case she might require help, but could not find her. At dawn he sighted the escorting destroyers on their way back to their base—they had lost her in the gale; at last, at midday, she was seen at anchor off Castro. There she remained for two or three days, and, when the weather moderated, was taken to Taranto to be docked. Hill meanwhile had had a risky experience. When the gale sprang up the tow-line broke time after time: the destroyers, as has been said, lost him; the *Marritimo* disappeared about 11 p.m., and about midnight he found himself drifting rapidly in towards the Italian coast. He was forced to let go both anchors in a mine-field, but was riding safely when, at dawn, a many-horned mine (of the "horizontal bar type") was discovered bobbing about close to the cables and only six feet from the *Orione's* bow; there was neither rifle aboard to destroy the mine nor boat to escape in before it touched something. Sighting the Castro light-house, Hill hoisted the Italian distress signal and the *Marritimo* came out. As she carried a small gun at the bow, the captain of the *Orione* suggested to Hill that the crew should temporarily be transferred to the tug, while the mine was sunk by means of this gun. He promised that he and the half-dozen Italians with him would then accompany Hill and his Australians in returning to the *Orione* and bringing her to port. No sooner, however, had the transfer to the tug been accomplished than the skipper of the tug headed for Castro at top speed, the protests of Hill failing to induce him to fire at the mine. The ship fortunately survived, and the Australian officers and men concerned in this rescue were mentioned in the Italian naval order of the day.[72]

[72] The official report of this patrol and a congratulatory letter from the rear-admiral at Brindisi are printed in *Appendix No. 23*.

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One other such incident (which occurred after the arrival of the British flotilla) is worthy of record. This was the sending of the *Torrens* and *Redpole* in a heavy sea to the rescue of the Italian destroyer *Benedetto Cairoli,* which had been rammed by another destroyer. The order for this rescue followed an S.O.S. signal received about 5 a.m. on the 10th of April, 1918, when the wind was blowing "three parts of a gale." The signal said "despatch is necessary," and the ships therefore at 5.30 increased from twelve to twenty-one knots. An officer of the *Torrens* afterwards wrote:[73]

It was only occasionally I could get a glimpse of the *Redpole*, who was leading us . . . a little black pebble in a setting of cotton wool, so immersed in foam was she. On board the *Torrens* it seemed we were moving in a sort of travelling Niagara, and every moment I expected the bridge to be swept away. At 6.10 "despatch is necessary" once more came through. People were drowning. . . . 23 knots was ordered, and I held my breath to see what would happen. I did not wait long, for the next moment the bridge was smashed in and the quartermaster and myself were knocked flat. . . . Jumping up we eased her down, repaired the damage as best we could, and went on again. Five minutes after this she shipped a beauty, which swept away the forward gun-shelters, broke the anchors adrift . . . twisted a lot of shot racks . . . flung the shells overboard . . . and sent the youngest and smallest rating on board to his death.[74] He was swept over the side in a torrent of foam which nothing could resist, and the poor little beggar was never seen again.

At 7 the scene of the disaster was reached. One of the destroyers involved in the collision was still afloat, with a French destroyer, which had picked up a number of Italian sailors and was searching for more, standing by. From the waters crowded with wreckage and the dead, the *Torrens* succeeded—after great difficulty in that sea—in saving three survivors, sighted on a raft.[75]

In the month in which the patrol was first instituted, the British had made a commencement of laying a fixed net-barrage, moored to surface buoys, across the Strait of Otranto. But the depth of water—in most parts, over 500 fathoms—rendered difficult this project, and the first had

[73] The description is taken from an article by Alec Jeffrey in the Sydney *Sunday Times*.

[74] Ordinary Seaman L. R. A. Moore (No. 4875; R.A.N.). Of Williamstown, Vic.; b. Brighton, Vic., 22 Aug., 1900. Drowned, 10 April, 1918.

[75] "One poor beggar had his teeth so tightly clenched," wrote the officer above-quoted, "that we had to employ a chisel to force them apart (to give him brandy and hot cocoa). All the time he kept on moaning 'Molto fredo, molto fredo'—'very cold.' It is not surprising, seeing he had been in the water 33 hours. . . . They all seemed most pleased . . . and insisted on shaking hands with everyone."

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weather broke up the barrier. As the result of a naval conference held in Rome in February, 1918, it was resolved greatly to strengthen the barrage force and to start vigorous operations in the spring. The laying of a submerged and fixed barrage designed by the French and Italians, with heavy nets supported by submarine buoys, was begun. These nets were to be armed with mines and to stretch from Leuca to Fano; and the mobile barrage was to be greatly increased so as to provide for several lines of submarines, destroyers, trawlers, and sloops, besides a new force of American submarine-chasers. The new offensive started officially on the 15th of April, and, though the whole of the intended force was not available until later, the Australian flotilla became only a small unit in the total. The force eventually comprised 35 destroyers, 4 torpedo-boats, 8 submarines, 6 sloops, 52 trawlers, 74 drifters, 31 motor launches, and 36 chasers, of which it was found possible to maintain on patrol about two-thirds of the fishing vessels and sloops, and one-third of the torpedo-craft. They were supplemented by a much increased air force. It was immediately after the initiation of these new measures that Austrian destroyers, as already described, raided the patrol and attacked the *Jackal* and *Hornet*.

(1) *Allied Submarines.* (2) *Advanced day-patrol (T.B.D's).* (3) *Advanced night-patrol (T.B.D's).* (4) *Trawlers and T.B.D's.* (5) *Trawlers and Drifters.* (6) *Fixed Barrage and Patrol.* (7) *American Chasers.*

The Australian destroyers now became part of the newly-arrived 5th British Destroyer Flotilla under command of Captain Chetwode,[76] and for some purposes used the 5th Flotilla's parent ship *Blenheim,* whose specialist officers conducted all gunnery and torpedo practices in the Australian ships as in the British. Commander Bond, who had succeeded

[76] Capt. G. K. Chetwode, C.B., C.B.E.; R.N.

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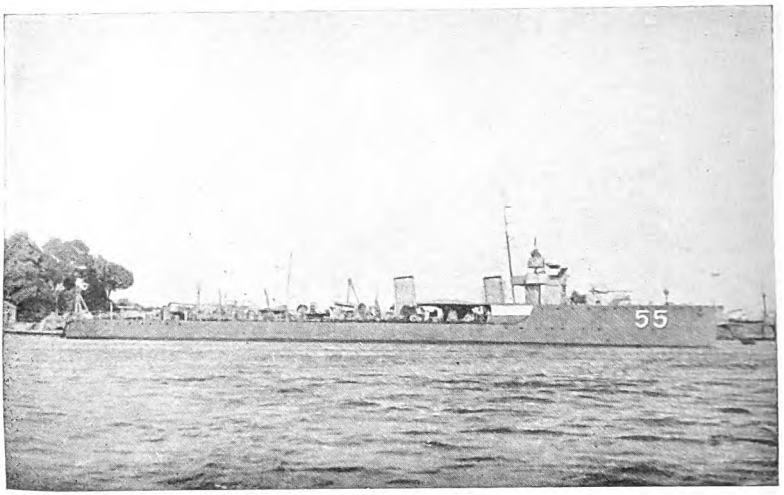
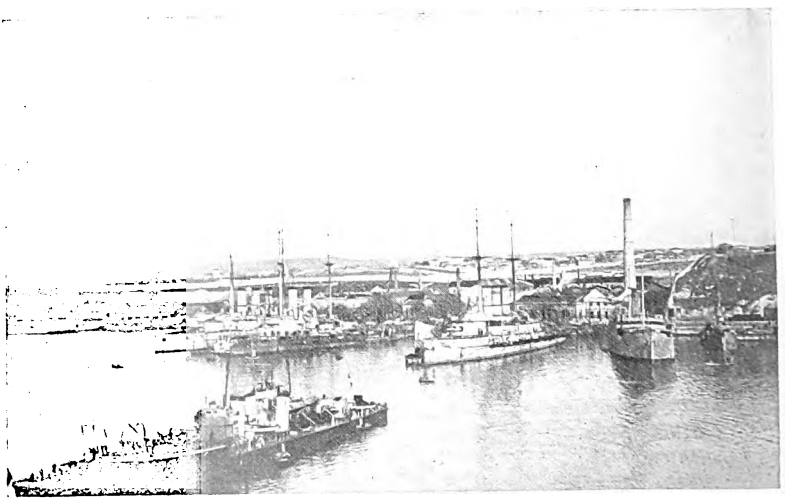


H.M.A.S. *Parramatta* AT BRINDISI

Lent by Able Seaman P. C. Slaughter, R.A.N.
Aust. War Memorial Collection No. J3199.



THE ALLIED FLEET AT SEBASTOPOL, 26 NOVEMBER 1918

H.M.A.S. *Swan* and H.M.S. *Shark* (08) in the foreground.

Lent by Petty Officer A. L. Swinden, R.A.N.

To face p. 325.

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Commander Warren (drowned in Brindisi Harbour), found himself in control of his six Australian ships only in respect of "personnel, pay, medical treatment, and general responsibility for the good organisation and conduct of the vessels"; he took charge of patrols to which he might be allotted, rarely had an Australian ship (other than the *Swan*) under his direct command, and on very rare occasions found more than one Australian in harbour at the same time as his own ship. This absorption of the R.A.N. ships into the body of the British fleet was, of course, obviously necessary for efficiency in war—just so the *Australia* and the cruisers had been absorbed in the North Sea squadrons; but it involved in the case of the destroyers certain disadvantages of much interest in their bearing upon the administrative control of Dominion ships when serving with the Imperial forces.[77]

In the first place Bond alone was responsible for the Australian personnel. He could not draw, as other commanders could, on the dépôt ship for ratings to fill vacancies; stoker petty officers—indispensable for the safe running of the ships—were particularly in demand but the proper complement was unobtainable, and at the end of May the *Swan* had to borrow two from British ships and the *Huon* had simply to go without and risk her boilers. The difficulty was enhanced by the facts that (*a*) the full complement of the Australian destroyers, especially as regarded seaman ratings, was considerably less than in the corresponding R.N. vessels, so that Bond had no margin to work on, and (*b*) Brindisi, the base harbour, was unhealthy and caused an excessive amount of sickness—the *Swan* in May was twenty-two ratings short, owing to an epidemic fever which entirely incapacitated men for four or five days. Consequently R.A.N. ships at sea worked in two watches only, whereas R.N. ships worked in three. Bond did his best by

[77] So far as Australia required naval representation in London, this was obtained through the presence of a naval officer, Captain Haworth-Booth, with a small staff, in the office of the High Commissioner. His position was that of "Naval Adviser," and the Australian Naval Board worked through him in dealing with all *administrative* matters affecting officers and men of the R.A.N. in the North Sea and elsewhere overseas. In the early days of the war it was intended that the "Military Adviser" on the High Commissioner's staff should discharge similar functions for the army. The task, however, almost immediately outgrew the capacity of this small staff, and the administrative problems of the army were solved by the maintenance of A.I.F. headquarters in London and Cairo, and, on a small scale, in Bombay (*see Vol. III, chap. vi.*).

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drafting men from R.A.N. ships in harbour to fill vacancies in those at sea; this device was unjust to the men drafted and not particularly satisfactory to the ships so manned, and its only justification was that otherwise the vessels at sea could not have fully manned their armament. A scheme worked out by Bond with the Commonwealth's naval representative in London, Captain Haworth-Booth,[78] endeavoured to provide for an exchange every three months of twenty ratings serving in the flotilla with twenty from the bigger ships in the North Sea; this varied the destroyer personnel, but did not increase it.

The vigorous campaign which had been launched in the spring was so effective that the Austrians were driven to plan the powerful counter-attack which never took place, but in preparing for which the *Svent Istfan* was sunk. The *Huon, Parramatta,* and *Yarra* were among the destroyers fitted with captive balloons. These balloons were flown from the ships, and their observers were trained to detect the shadows indicating possible submarines and to con their ship towards them. To the destroyer carrying the balloon was attached another destroyer to act as "killer" of the submarine when sighted. The number of destroyers available for the barrage, which had previously been greatly increased, fell away during July to twenty-five,[79] of which six worked permanently at Corfu as "killers" for the drifters, and eight—two of them with balloons—had to be maintained constantly on the patrol. As destroyers had frequently to be detached for convoying, and others became casualties,[80] the maintenance of the reliefs for these duties fully taxed the powers of the force. On the 8th of August the *Yarra* (by her own fault, as an inquiry decided) came into collision with the *Huon,* and both ships had to be docked for repairs; the *Huon* never saw war-service again, for as soon as she left the dockyard an epidemic of influenza swept her crew. On the 2nd of October the *Swan* and *Warrego* assisted at the bombardment of Durazzo, carried

[78] Rear-Admiral Sir Francis Haworth-Booth, K.C.M.G.; R.N. Naval Adviser to the High Commissioner for Australia, 1911/20; of Dunswell, Hull, Eng.; b. Derwent Bank, Malton, Yorks, Eng., 18 May, 1864.

[79] The French destroyers, among others, were withdrawn in June.

[80] In May the *Phœnix* was torpedoed. The *Warrego* tried to tow her into Valona, but she sank near the entrance. The crew was saved.

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out by three Italian armoured cruisers and three British light cruisers, with a protecting force of about fifty British, Italian, French, American, and Australian torpedo craft.[81]

Six months earlier there had commenced a marked change in the naval situation in the Mediterranean. The Germans had in April penetrated to the Crimean Peninsula, and the Ukraine Government had thereupon handed over to them some of the ships of the Russian Black Sea Fleet. It was difficult at the time to be certain what ships these were, but they were believed to include at least one very powerful unit, the super-dreadnought *Volya*. To meet this new menace, the French sent four battleships to the Ægean Sea, and withdrew from the Otranto barrage their own destroyers and, later, some of the British. Fortunately, by the time when the latter were summoned, the end of the war was approaching, and it was evident that the German submarines were leaving the Adriatic. On the 17th of October the *Torrens* and *Yarra* sailed with the *Blenheim* and the bulk of the 5th Flotilla for Mudros; Bond with the *Swan* and *Warrego* was left at Brindisi to take over the work of Commander (D)[82] at the base. On the 25th, however, the two Australian ships were ordered to Port Said to assist the Japanese flotilla in escorting troops to Salonica,[83] and, directly after the signing of the armistice, the *Swan* embarked a British attaché and two Greek officers and took them to Constantinople. The *Swan* then rejoined the 5th Flotilla, which at this time was at Ismid in the eastern corner of the Sea of Marmora, attached to an Allied fleet that had just made a demonstration before Constantinople;[84] at that time the *Yarra, Torrens,* and *Parramatta,* which had been patrolling off Suvla Bay and Imbros

[81] An Italian battleship and light cruiser and two British light cruisers also formed part of the covering and supporting force. The *Swan* and *Warrego* were protecting these light cruisers.

[82] This designates the appointment held by the senior officer (in this case a commander) in a flotilla of destroyers operating within a specified area.

[83] While on this duty the *Swan* rescued two British aviators whose seaplane had crashed between Port Said and Mudros; they had been in the water for 36 hours, holding to the floats of the seaplane, and, when picked up, were almost exhausted.

[84] The first merchant ship of the Allies to pass through the Dardanelles after the armistice was the Australian coastal liner *Katoomba,* then carrying troops for Constantinople and the Black sea (*see Appendix No. 6, section i*).

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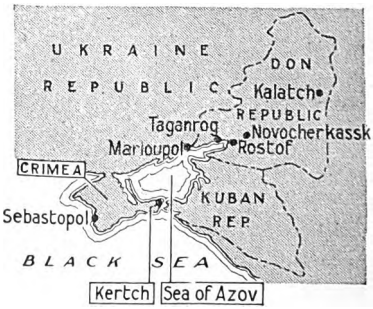
and had passed the Dardanelles with the fleet,[85] were also at Ismid, the *Warrego* at Salonica, and the *Huon* on her way up the Ægean to rejoin her comrades. The Australians, however, were soon scattered again. The *Yarra* and *Torrens* were sent off across the Black Sea to visit Novorossiisk and Batum. The *Swan* and *Parramatta,* with six British destroyers, joined a squadron of Allied ships at Constantinople, and passed the Bosphorus on the 25th of November to take over some Russian warships for the anti-Bolshevik Russian forces at Sebastopol. Thenceforth the *Parramatta* was used to carry despatches and mails between Sebastopol and Constantinople; for the *Swan*[86] a more important mission was reserved.

In March, 1917, the Russian revolution had overthrown the Tsar's Government and placed Russia in the power of men friendly to Germany. In March, 1918, the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk had practically handed over the resources of the Russian Empire (including a great deal of money and material supplied by the Allies) to the enemy. The treaty included the recognition of the Ukraine—the great wheat-growing area of Southern Russia west of the River Volga—as a nominally independent state, in order that Germany and Austria might draw from it supplies of food, though it was not long before the Bolshevik Government at Moscow was attempting, in spite of the treaty, to regain this rich territory. Forthwith German and Austrian armies occupied most of the Ukraine, but left its eastern corner—the country of the



[85] While the destroyers in line ahead were steaming through the straits, the commander of the *Parramatta* requested permission to fly, as a tribute to the men of the A.I.F. killed at Anzac, an Australian blue ensign that had been presented by the people of Parramatta in pre-war days. The answer was: "The Commonwealth blue ensign may be flown at the portyard in honour of Australia's glorious dead." The Australian destroyers accordingly hoisted their Commonwealth blue ensigns, and kept them flying until they arrived at Constantinople early next morning.

[86] On the 25th of December, 1918, Commander Burrows took over the *Swan* and the position of Commander (D), Bond being in hospital. This provisional appointment was confirmed on the 12th of February, 1919.

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Don and Kuban Cossacks—to be held against Bolshevism by its own forces. When, after the armistice, the German and Austrian armies withdrew from the Ukraine, the position of these Cossack defenders became perilous, and the Allies (who were ready to support against Bolshevik aggression any part of Russia that might be able as well as willing to share in its own defence) determined to send a mission of enquiry to the Cossack headquarters at Novocherkassk on the Don. In December, therefore, the *Swan,* accompanied by the French destroyer *Bisson,* was ordered to enter the Sea of Azov and report on conditions prevailing at Marioupol, Taganrog, and the surrounding country. No larger craft could be employed, as the Strait of Kertch was extremely shallow and all the beacons and leading lights had been destroyed: the *Swan,* in fact, had often barely a foot of water under her keel. Embarking the Russian Admiral Kononoff and an interpreter, the two destroyers visited Kertch (where the anti-Bolshevik forces seemed entirely disorganised) and reached Marioupol in a snow-storm; Bond, with three other Australian officers and six Australian ratings, along with the French Captain Cochin and his staff, went by train on the 8th of December to Rostof and thence to Novocherkassk, to be met by General Krasnoff, the Ataman (locally-elected viceroy). By him they were received with religious rites as well as festive entertainment, but in reply to all suggestions they were obliged to maintain the attitude of sympathetic enquirers without power to give help against the Bolshevik enemy.[87] They were shown the various military training schools, and were on their way to visit the Cossack fighting front near Bobrov, 300 miles north of the Sea of Azov, when a break-through by the Bolsheviks[88] threatened their communications and caused this visit to be abandoned. They accordingly went south on the 14th of December; inspected the shell factory at Taganrog, and thence visited Ekaterinodar in the Kuban Cossack country, where

[87] The local leaders obviously desired the mission to be construed by their people as a sign of support from the Allies, and the British and French officers had constantly to combat this notion. The Ataman, in his capacity as viceroy, decorated Australian members of the mission as follows: Commander A. G. H. Bond, Order of St. Vladimar, 4th Class, with swords; and Engineer-Lieutenant-Commander G. W. Bloomfield (of Brisbane), Lieutenant J. G. Boyd (of Sydney), and Paymaster Sub-Lieutenant D. Munro (of North Sydney) with the Order of St. Anne, 2nd Class.

[88] 60,000 Cossacks were reported to be holding 720,000 Bolsheviks.

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a British mission was stationed, and where they met the Russian General Denikin. They then rejoined the *Swan* at Marioupol and brought back to Sebastopol[89] a full report for the use of the British Foreign Office.[90]

IV

When the fighting spirit of Germany at last collapsed, and the war suddenly ended, ten ships of the Australian Squadron were employed (or expected) in European waters. The *Australia, Melbourne,* and *Sydney* were with the Grand Fleet; the destroyer flotilla was in the Black Sea or its neighbourhood; the *Brisbane* was on her way to the Levant from Colombo. The destroyers had still a little work to do, which has already been described; for the rest, the sooner they could make back to their home ports the better—the *Australia* had not seen an Australian harbour since the first days of the war, and the two light cruisers not since November, 1914. For these three, however, there was still a duty waiting. The German High Sea Fleet, as all the world knows, riddled with mutiny and therefore incapable of the great final effort for which its masters had been so jealously preserving it, was to be surrendered to the custody of Britain; and, since the war might not end—as so many had desired—with a triumphal march of the Allies through Berlin, it was decided to substitute a pageant of naval triumph that should mark the aggressor's final humiliation. On the 21st of November the whole Grand Fleet—33 battleships, 9 battle-cruisers, 5 "special service" cruisers, 32 light cruisers, more than 100 destroyers—steamed out in two divisions in line ahead to meet the enemy they had awaited for so many years. About 10 a.m. the Germans arrived, steaming between the two British lines—5 battle-cruisers at their head, then 9 battleships, 7 light cruisers, 49 destroyers. The *Australia,* at the head of her squadron,[91] led the capital ships of the British port line;

[89] At Sebastopol the *Swan* helped to guard the railway station at the head of the Valley of Inkerman, which the Bolsheviks were endeavouring to control.

[90] Two other ships of which mention may here be made are the submarine dépôt-ship *Platypus* and the oil-tanker *Kurumba*, which at the outbreak of war were being built in home dockyards for the Australian Navy. Both these, when completed, were taken over for the duration of the war by the Imperial authorities, and manned by British ratings. The narrative of their doings must be sought in the Imperial archives.

[91] The *Australia* was flying the white ensign presented to her by the Royal Society of St. George, Queensland. This flag is now in the Australian War Memorial.

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the *Melbourne* and *Sydney* were in their normal place in the 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron. By 3 p.m. the Germans were at anchor in the Firth of Forth. There each German ship was placed in the custody of a British ship, the *Australia* being given charge of the *Hindenburg,* the *Melbourne* of the *Nürnberg,* and the *Sydney* (most appropriately) of the *Emden.*[92] Each guardship must send aboard its ward an inspection party under a commander, to search for concealed explosives (it was suspected that the Germans might have planned to destroy their ships rather than leave them in British hands) and to give the captains instructions for their next movements. A cursory examination on the 21st was followed by a very thorough search on the 22nd; then the captured vessels were escorted, in small parties, to their prison at Scapa Flow.

In December the question of the return of Australian ships to their home waters was seriously considered. Even if the Australian ships could be released from service at once, it was estimated that their refit for the long homeward voyage would occupy at least eight weeks; the bigger units—except the *Melbourne,* which had in the early autumn reported serious defects in her main circulator and the need for renewing boiler tubes, and had therefore been sent to Portsmouth at the end of November to refit—could not be ready till April at earliest. It was therefore arranged that the *Melbourne,* taking with her the destroyers and the *Kurumba,* should leave England in February, the *Australia, Sydney, Brisbane,* and *Platypus* following in April. The destroyers and the *Brisbane,* it will be remembered, were in the Eastern Mediterranean.

On the 26th of December, 1918, the *Swan, Yarra, Parramatta,* and *Huon* left Ismid in the Sea of Marmora for Malta, where they were joined by the *Torrens;* the *Warrego,* which had been in dock at Constantinople, picked them up at Gibraltar. Leaving that port on the 3rd of January, 1919, the flotilla next day ran into heavy weather off Cape St. Vincent, hove to, and became separated, the *Torrens* and *Warrego* taking refuge in the Tagus;[93] the *Swan* and *Yarra*

[92] These light cruisers, built during the war, were named after the ships sunk in 1914 by the *Kent* and *Sydney.*

[93] The *Torrens* had condenser trouble, and the *Warrego* was ordered to stand by her.

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struggled on through a four days' storm, and reached Plymouth shortly after midnight on the 8th; the *Huon* and *Parramatta* received such damage off Cape Finisterre that they were driven into Ferrol,[94] and did not reach England until the 14th. The other two destroyers arrived from Lisbon on the 11th. On the 15th of February the *Swan* and *Torrens,* which had left various gear at Malta, sailed from England for that port in advance of the flotilla; an accident to the *Huon* delayed the rest until the 6th of March, when they left in company with the *Melbourne,* reaching Malta on the 13th and taking aboard a good deal of spare material which had been put into store when the flotilla first arrived in 1917. The *Yarra, Parramatta, Huon,* and *Torrens* also regained their third torpedo-tubes, which had been removed to accommodate an equipment more suitable for their work in the Adriatic. On the 17th all the seven warships left for Port Said (arriving on the 20th), Aden (25th), Colombo (2nd to 10th of April), Malacca, Singapore (15th of April), and Port Darwin (26th). On the last day of the voyage, unfortunately, the oil-supply of the *Yarra* and *Parramatta* gave out, and they were towed into Darwin by the *Warrego.*

The *Sydney* in the end sailed on the 9th of April, taking with her the *Platypus* and some submarines which had been presented by the Admiralty to the Commonwealth. The most notable feature of her voyage was her arrival in the middle of June at Singapore, where (and at Penang) disturbances had just broken out among the native population. Called on to assist the authorities in preserving order, Captain Cayley[95] landed, during the evening of the 19th of June, parties which at once cowed the insurgents. The ship's departure was delayed for another ten days until all danger was over.[96] The *Platypus,* with the submarines, reached Thursday Island on

[94] The Spanish authorities, seeing the *Parramatta's* signals for help, endeavoured to assist by sending tugs to search for her during the night of the 8th of January. The *Huon* eventually escorted her in.

[95] Capt. H. P. Cayley, R.A.N.; b. Clifton, Bristol, Eng., 29 Dec., 1877.

[96] It is worth while to put on record the opinion of the military authorities at Singapore in this connection. Major-General D. H. Ridout, thanking Cayley for his action, wrote: "The presence of the landing party of H.M.A.S. *Sydney* had an instantaneous effect both in Singapore and Penang. I . . . was very much struck by the promptness with which the landing party was organised and landed on the night of 19th-20th June. I regret very much that your departure should have been delayed . . . but it will be some compensation to know that by having remained, and by having acted with such promptness and firmness, the disturbances which might have gathered strength were checked so easily."

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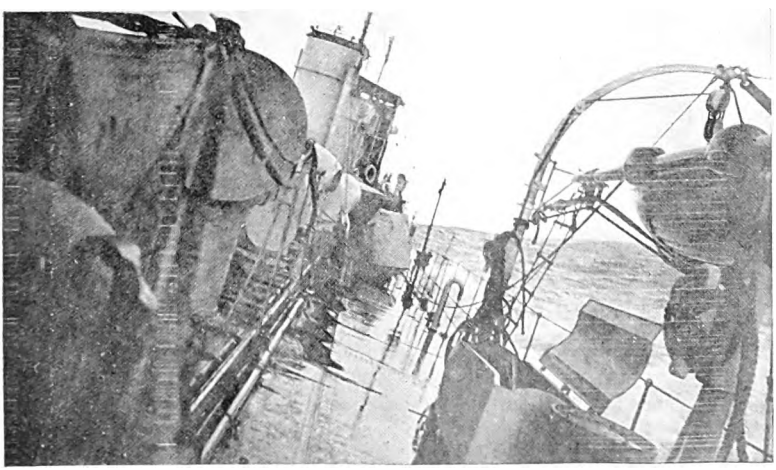
MEMBERS OF THE ALLIED MISSION MEETING THE ATAMAN OF THE DONS AT NOVOCHERKASSK, DECEMBER 1918

Lent by Engineer-Commr. G. W. Bloomfield, R.A.N.
Aust. War Memorial Collection No. EN261.



H.M.A.S. *Swan* IN THE BAY OF BISCAY, JANUARY 1919

Lent by Petty Officer A. L. Swinden, R.A.N.

To face p. 332.

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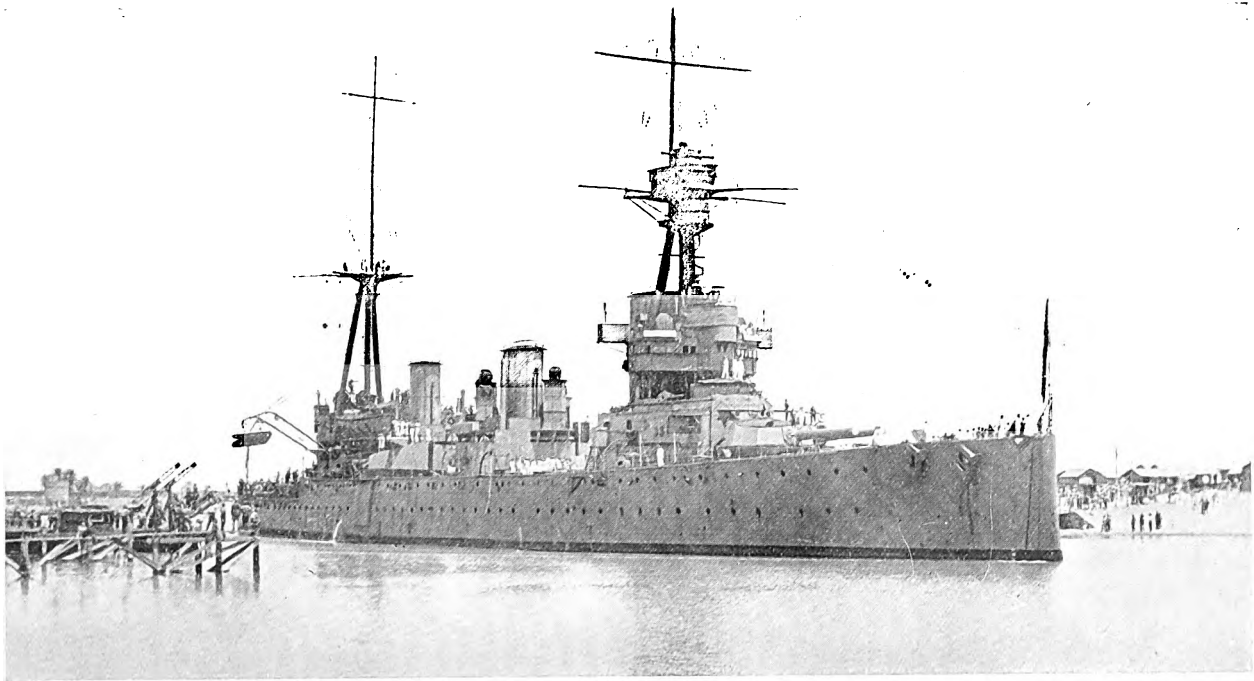

H.M.A.S. *Australia* PASSING THROUGH THE SUEZ CANAL AT EL KANTARA ON HER WAY BACK TO AUSTRALIA, 1919

Aust. War Memorial Official Photo. No. B3031.

To face p. 333.

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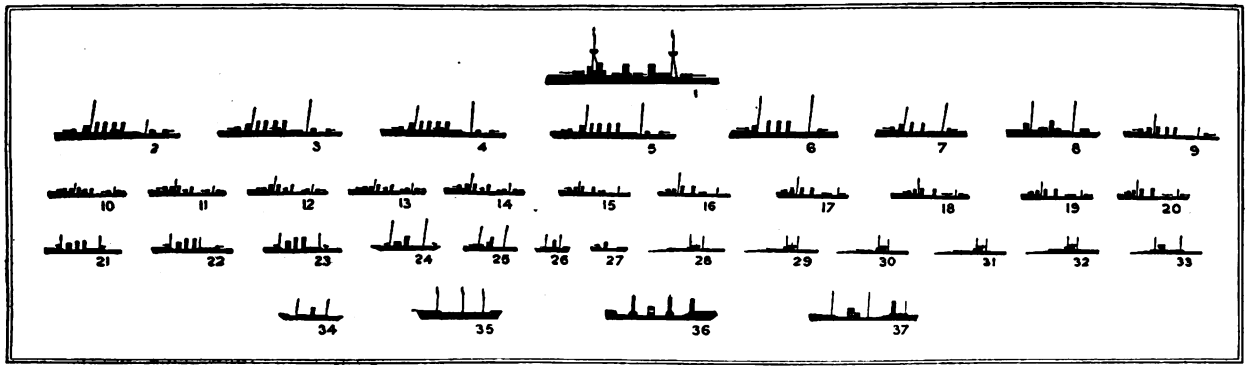
Diagram No. 2.



SILHOUETTES SHOWING STRENGTH OF AUSTRALIAN NAVY, 1919.

(1) *Australia,* (2) *Melbourne,* (3) *Sydney,* (4) *Brisbane,* (5) *Adelaide*—building, (6) *Encounter,* (7) *Pioneer,* (8) *Platypus,* (9) *Anzac,* (10) *Tasmania,* (11) *Tattoo,* (12) *Swordsman,* (13) *Stalwart,* (14) *Success,* (15) *Parramatta,* (16) *Yarra,* (17) *Warrego,* (18) *Huon,* (19) *Torrens,* (20) *Swan,* (21) *Marguerite,* (22) *Geranium,* (23) *Mallow,* (24) *Una,* (25) *Protector,* (26) *Gayundah,* (27) *Countess of Hopetoun,* (28) Submarine *J 1,* (29) Submarine *J 2,* (30) Submarine *J 3,* (31) Submarine *J 4,* (32) Submarine *J 5,* (33) Submarine *J 7,* (34) *Franklin,* (35) *Tingira,* (36) *Biloela,* (37) *Kurumba.*

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the 29th of June; the *Sydney* did not arrive there until the 10th of July. The departure of the *Australia* from British waters was accompanied with more formality. On the 22nd of April the Prince of Wales and Admiral Sir Rosslyn Wemyss[97] (the First Sea Lord of the Admiralty) inspected the ship's company at Portsmouth and brought a message from the King. In welcoming the Prince, Sir Joseph Cook, then High Commissioner for the Commonwealth, emphasised the Imperial work of the squadron:

> "Our navy has been proud to serve the Empire and our Allies, not only as part of the Grand Fleet in the North Sea, but also in every part of the world. In this way it has fulfilled the purpose of its creation, to share the burdens and sacrifices as well as the privileges of a free Imperial community."

On the 23rd the *Australia* and *Brisbane* left Portsmouth. The former after an uneventful voyage arrived at Fremantle on the 28th of May, 1919; the latter, picking up and convoying one of the submarines, reached Thursday Island on the 14th of June.[98]

. . . . . .

So, unostentatiously as they had slipped away at the first signs of the war, the Australian ships came home again. Admitted as equals into the greatest service the seas have known, their keenest effort had been to prove that honour fully deserved. They had, as the High Commissioner rightly said, fulfilled the purposes of their creation. They had saved Australia from raids and bombardments and the other concomitants of actual war. They had helped to protect nearly every trade-route, nearly every dominion and colony and protectorate, within the bounds of the Empire. They had seen Canadian ports, and West Indian, and East African: they had safeguarded the peace of our Eastern Empire, and had hunted down destroyers of Indian and Chinese and South African commerce over five of the great oceans of the world. They had shared in the defence of the Mediterranean, wherethrough

[97] Admiral of the Fleet Lord Wester Wemyss, G.C.B., C.M.G., M.V.O.; R.N. First Sea Lord of the Admiralty, 1917/19; b. 12 April, 1864. Died 24 May, 1933.

[98] The six destroyers—*Anzac, Tattoo, Swordsman, Success, Tasmania,* and *Stalwart*—presented to Australia by the British Government, arrived in April 1920.

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went all the succours of Britain's Eastern campaigns and no small part of the food that sustained Britain herself. They had toiled under the eyes of the Empire's best admirals in the very centre of the naval war. Primarily Australian, and persistently Australian, they had taken their full share of Imperial tasks, and everywhere had upheld the honour of the country which gave them being and owned them. Every prophecy of their detractors had been proved false, every hope of their upholders justified and exceeded. It is not in this volume, compiled mainly from dehumanised official records which rarely venture outside the realm of annalised fact, that future generations will learn the full value of their achievement; but here, one hopes, has been concentrated the less important narrative of events—savoured with as much human feeling as the documents allowed to show through. For to-day and the immediate future that must suffice. Our children will discover, and realise with pride, not so much what the Australian Squadron did in the Great War, as what it was . . . . the symbol, alive and ubiquitous, of its country's energy and versatility, and incomparable gift of comradeship.

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CHAPTER XI

THE AUSTRALIAN COASTAL PATROL: RAIDERS AND MINE-FIELDS

TOWARDS the end of 1916 Australia's part in the naval war seemed to have become almost automatic and mechanical. The *Australia* in the North Sea, the light cruisers in the North Atlantic, the destroyers and small cruisers in East Indian waters, were engaged under various admirals in a routine of necessary though tedious duties. All that the Naval Board could do for them was to keep up a regular supply of reliefs and mails. During the year, as we have seen, the Board had considered the possibility of enemy raids into Australian seas, and made or suggested counter-preparations; but nothing had happened, and there was apparently nothing to be done outside the routine. Early in December one of the principal officers at Australian headquarters was contemplating longer week-ends merely because he was tired of sitting in his office with no intelligent occupation.

But he did not contemplate them for long; nor had he ever the chance again. With the beginning of 1917, the strain of the German "unrestricted" submarine campaign was upon Australia, soon to be followed by rumours of raiders (some of them more than rumours), the discovery of mine-fields on the main coastal highway, countless reports of enemy aeroplanes (all untrue but all disturbing), and a whole series of irksome but indispensable counter-measures, ranging from patrols and mine-sweeping to wharf-guards and a drastic censorship of baggage and cargo as well as of news and private messages. During no months since the First Convoy sailed was so heavy a strain put upon the brains and the mechanism of the Navy Office as during the long anxious year of 1917.

About Christmas-time of 1916 news came from the Admiralty (*a*) that a Chilean vessel, manned by Germans probably armed with rifles, had left the coast of Chile on the

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10th of December, (*b*) that a German raider had been sighted in the North Atlantic on the 4th. At the same time the censorship on shipping news was by direction of the British Chief Censor made considerably more severe. As the *Brisbane* was already under orders for Europe—was, indeed, just leaving Thursday Island—all that the Board could do by way of coastal protection was to send the *Encounter* to Western Australia, bring the *Parramatta* and *Yarra* thence to the east coast, and strengthen the existing motor-boat patrol in Torres Straits by adding to it the armed yacht *Sleuth,* which had in peace-time been the private yacht *Ena* (she was commissioned on the 13th of January, 1917, and began her patrol on the 5th of March). During January and February further reports were received concerning the raider in the Atlantic, and rumours of a mine-field laid off Cape Agulhas; on the 8th of March it was definitely known that the raider had entered the Indian Ocean.

But already the Board was awake to the extreme gravity of the situation. During February it drew up a report for the Admiralty (which was despatched on the 7th of March), setting forth the inadequacy of Australian defences against raider attacks now that the vessels of the Australian Squadron had been absorbed in more urgent tasks elsewhere:—

> "Of the vessels of the Royal Australian Navy, *Australia, Melbourne, Sydney,* and *Brisbane* are serving in European waters; *Psyche, Fantome,* and three destroyers are continuously employed, chiefly in the Dutch East Indies, under the Commander-in-Chief, China Station. . . . *Encounter* is at present stationed in S.W. Australia for the protection of shipping in the neighbourhood of Cape Leeuwin. . . . Three destroyers are available now for the protection of shipping between Sydney and Bass Strait. To-day they are actually patrolling, one with Jervis Bay as a base, one from Twofold Bay, and one at the eastern end of Bass Strait. The above disposition of *Encounter* and destroyers has been adopted at the present moment partly as an exercise and partly because the raider reported last in the Atlantic on January 12th might possibly appear in these waters in the next week or two.

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"At present all our vessels are available; but when the division of destroyers in China waters is being relieved by the division in these waters, and when any of the vessels are refitting, there is a considerable curtailment of force. It is sometimes necessary to leave south-western Australia quite unprotected, and at times there have been no vessels available for the protection of southern and eastern Australian waters. No attack has been made on our trade in Australian waters, but it appears possible that the absence of precautions might tempt an attack. . . . There are, on the coast of Australia and in the near islands, anchorages and harbours where there are no inhabitants, and which are seldom or never visited. When European waters are found to be too unhealthy for submarines, it seems possible that they may be tempted farther afield.

". . . . About 36 guns (6-pr. to 4.7-inch), chiefly old army guns, are available for the defensive armament of coastal shipping against submarines. . . . If their Lordships are of opinion that there is likely to be a danger of submarine attack either here or in Chinese waters, it is suggested that our destroyers should be supplied with depth-charges and rapid sweeps. Some motor-boats, &c., are available, and some use might be made of indicator-nets and patrol-vessels. A small mine-sweeping flotilla is being trained at Sydney and at Melbourne. . . .

"The Naval Board think it desirable to bring the above considerations to their Lordships' notice at the present time, not in a spirit of alarm, but in order that they may be sure that the condition of preparedness of Australia is of a degree that has the approval of their Lordships. If their Lordships advise no change, the Naval Board will be in a position to inform the Government that the present state of affairs is such as to justify confidence."

The appearance of the enemy raider in the Indian Ocean made it necessary to resume the convoy system of despatching troopships to Europe, and on the 3rd of April the *Encounter* was (by orders from Whitehall) sent to New Zealand to pick up a convoy, escort it to Fremantle, and then take a joint

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convoy of Australian and New Zealand troopships to a rendezvous on the way to Colombo; thence the East Indies Squadron would take over the responsibility. Deprived of its one cruiser, and impatient of the long delay which is unavoidable for mails in wartime, the Board on the 13th renewed by cable its request for help:—

> "Some redistribution of ships may follow joining of America in war. . . . Some relief would be welcome to cope with increased responsibilities due to possible attack by raider and necessity for guarding departure of troop transports, wheat and meat vessels, and coastal shipping."

The suggestion about American help was, as all the world knows, decidedly premature, but the Admiralty did what it could. On the 18th it informed the Board that arrangements had been made with the Japanese Government to send ships to the coast of Queensland and to the Fremantle-Colombo track; further, if the situation demanded it, ships of the East Indies Squadron would be despatched to Australian waters. A letter of the 12th of May, confirming the earlier promise and discussing the Board's letter of March, mentioned that the *Brisbane* had been attached to the East Indies Squadron and would probably be used for service in Australian waters if the need arose. Danger from enemy submarines was discounted, but "the supply and organisation of various technical anti-submarine devices" were indefinitely foreshadowed. The Board's reference to the local supply of guns for defensive armament was met with a suggestion that those guns would be of much more use "in the Atlantic, Mediterranean, and North Sea."

The remedial measures above mentioned had not, of course, been delayed so long. When the *Encounter* was sent to New Zealand, H.M.S. *Doris* of the East Indies Squadron was detached to escort transports from Fremantle to the Mauritius. On the 16th of April it was decided to send the Japanese ships *Chikuma* and *Hirado* to Australia, and on the 27th the *Chikuma* was allotted to the Fremantle-Colombo track. In June, when Australia's whole destroyer flotilla was suddenly called to the Mediterranean, the *Brisbane* was ordered to Fremantle; in the same month another British cruiser escorted

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more Australian troopships from Fremantle to the Mauritius. It cannot be denied that in the months of which the story is now to be told Australia was much exposed to the attacks of any daring enemy, and the responsibility of the Naval Board was heavy; but it is equally undeniable that, considering the extreme gravity of the German submarine campaign of 1917, and the urgent need for concentrating in European waters every vessel that might efficiently thwart it, the Admiralty gave Australia all the help it could spare.

II

Naval assistance was on the other occasions most readily accorded by the Japanese Government, which showed itself anxious to establish and maintain close relations with the Commonwealth. As early as 1914 the Japanese Admiralty proposed to place a naval officer at Sydney. In September-November of that year the battle-cruiser *Ibuki*[1] assisted the *Minotaur, Melbourne,* and *Sydney* to escort the First Convoy to Aden. In December, 1914, and January, 1915, the *Chikuma* and *Yahagi* cruised off Northern Queensland, joining, just before they left Australian waters, two destroyers at Rabaul. In April, 1915, the cruiser *Nisshin* visited Rabaul and Madang. In May-July the *Aso* and *Soya,* training ships for naval cadets, paid a complimentary visit to Australian ports between Fremantle and Rabaul; and in May-July, 1916, the *Azuma* and *Iwate* did the same between Fremantle and Brisbane, thence diverging to Auckland. In 1915 also Japanese as well as Australian warships were attached to the British China Squadron for work in the Malay Archipelago.

In 1917 the help given by Japan to Australia was of more importance. In March of that year three Japanese cruisers and eight destroyers were used to escort troopships—none of them, as it chanced, Australian—across the Indian Ocean.[2] In May and June the small cruisers *Niitaka* and *Tsushima* were patrolling between the Cape of Good Hope and the Mauritius, and the larger *Idzumo, Nisshin,* and *Kasuga* were escorting cargo carriers between Fremantle and Colombo. Nearer home

[1] *See note on p. 151.*

[2] In April, 1916, the British Government asked the Japanese to assist "in protecting transport routes between Australia and Aden in the event of a raider reaching the Indian Ocean." The Japanese Government readily agreed, and sent a flotilla, which, however, worked mainly east of Singapore.

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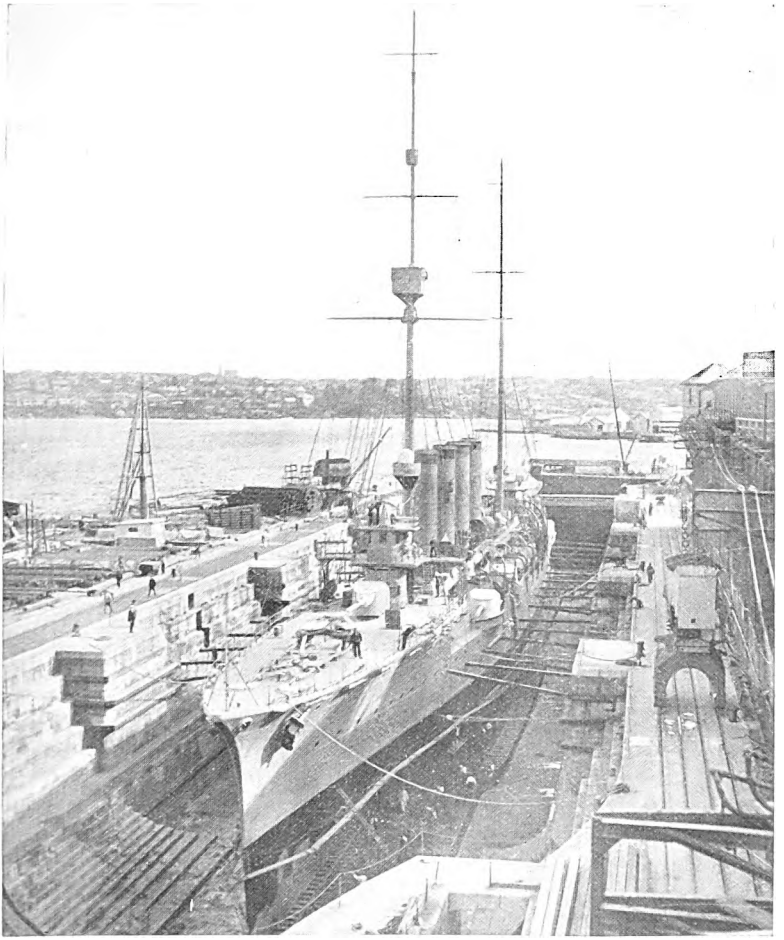
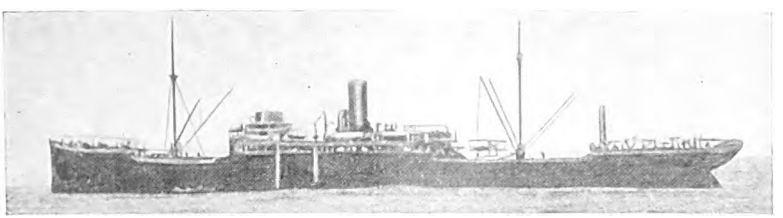


THE JAPANESE CRUISER *Hirado* IN DOCK AT COCKATOO ISLAND, NEW SOUTH WALES, 8 MAY 1917

Lent by Aust. Commonwealth Shipping Board.



THE GERMAN RAIDER *Wolf*

Her seaplane can be seen in front of the after mast.

Lent by Capt. A. Donaldson.

To face p. 340.

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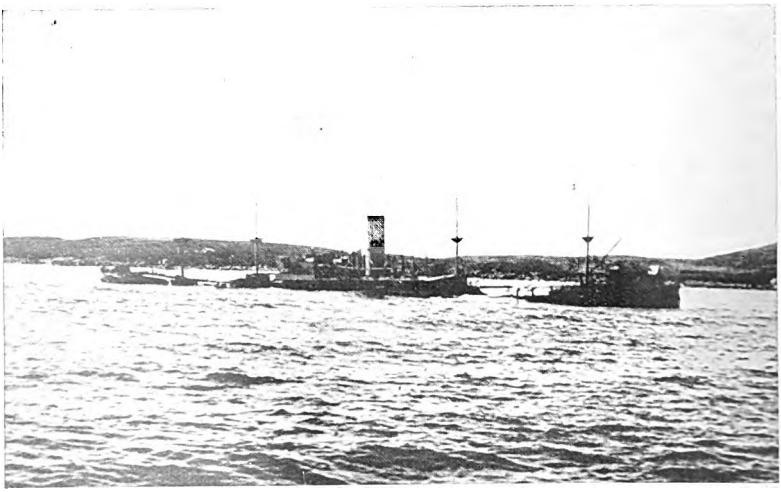
THE *Matunga*

Photograph taken at Port Alexis, 1914.

Taken by W. H. Lucas, Esq.
Aust. War Memorial Collection No. J3109.



THE *Cumberland* LYING WRECKED OFF GABO ISLAND, 7 JULY 1917

Lent by Joiner W. Nicoll, R.A.N.
Aust. War Memorial Collection No. A710.

To face p. 341.

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the modern light cruiser *Hirado* reached Thursday Island on the 23rd of April, and her sister-ship, the *Chikuma,* reached Fremantle on the 2nd of May; for the rest of the year these vessels were, in the absence of Australian ships serving elsewhere, employed directly in the defence of Australia; they remained in Australian waters, or between Australia and Fiji, until November and December respectively,[3] co-operating with the Commonwealth naval authorities in the three serious crises of the year—those connected with the *Cumberland,* the *Matunga,* and the *Seeadler.* The *Nisshin, Kasuga,* and *Yahagi* patrolled the coast of Western Australia at intervals during the year, the *Encounter* having been called away to work in the western Pacific.

By the middle of January, 1918, these Japanese warships had been withdrawn, the seas south of the equator, from the middle of the Indian Ocean to Tahiti, being in February guarded by Australian warships only. In March, however, the light cruiser *Yahagi* visited Fremantle, and in May-October assisted Australian ships in patrolling the north-eastern coasts of the continent and the islands northwards. Also from mid-August to the beginning of October the cruiser *Nisshin* patrolled off Fremantle. The most cordial relations prevailed between the visiting Japanese squadrons or ships and the naval authorities in Australia, and the Japanese admirals were supplied with all necessary information.

By the valuable support of which an account—complete, though necessarily summarised—has here been given, the Commonwealth, and the British Government in relation with the Commonwealth, were assisted in securing the naval defence of the sea-borne trade and to some extent of the coasts of Australia at certain times of especial difficulty. The

[3] The *Chikuma,* reaching Fremantle on the 8th of May, proceeded *viâ* Melbourne to Sydney, the *Hirado,* cruising down the eastern coast, after touching at Townsville, Sydney, and Melbourne, visited New Zealand. The two ships joined each other in Sydney on 20 June, and worked together at Sydney and Jervis Bay until 14 August, when the *Chikuma* left for New Zealand and the *Hirado* for Tasmania. They rejoined one another at Sydney in September, the *Hirado* next visiting Vila, and again meeting the *Chikuma* at Suva. Thence the *Hirado* sailed to Melbourne, and, turning northwards, after touching at Sydney, Townsville, and Thursday Island, left Australian waters on the 11th of November, 1917. The *Chikuma,* after visiting Hobart, followed her consort six weeks later, leaving Thursday Island on Christmas Day. In the course of her eight months' service on the Australian and New Zealand coasts she had visited Sydney 9 times, Jervis Bay 6, and Melbourne, Hobart, and Townsville twice each; the *Hirado* visited Sydney 8 times, Jervis Bay 4 times, and Melbourne and Townsville twice. Each ship visited once the New Zealand ports, Thursday Island, and Brisbane.

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Japanese fleet was much the most powerful in the Pacific. The impression, however, conveyed by certain newspaper statements—frequently made during the war with the praiseworthy object of strengthening Anglo-Japanese friendship[4]—that Japan was undertaking the sole guardianship of the Indian and Pacific Oceans and the escort of Australian troops to Europe, was entirely untrue. Such unintentional misstatements, if allowed to stand uncontradicted, would constitute a real injustice to the Australian and the two British squadrons in Eastern waters during the war; and those officers and men of Japanese ships who were constantly in touch and on the most cordial terms with both our squadrons and our naval authorities, and well aware of their work, would assuredly be the last to wish to deprive them of the full recognition of their labours.

III

Early in March, it will be remembered, the Board ascertained that an enemy raider was in the Indian Ocean. This vessel, the *Wolf*, was to affect Australian affairs and to bring the war into Australian waters after a fashion fortunately unique. Her mines destroyed an Australian mail-steamer in the Indian Ocean and a large Australian cargo-vessel within a few miles of the Australian coast—besides inflicting on Australian sea-borne commerce (through the attributing of their havoc to another agency) twelve months of the most drastic restrictions; the alleged exploits of her little areoplane originated a long series of harassing false alarms and spy-fevers; and her actual captures included several important merchant-vessels, including one whose fate was for a long time the most insoluble problem of the Australian intelligence service. Her story has, unfortunately, little to do with the Commonwealth Navy. As has been said, that navy was scattered over the Seven Seas, and its one home-keeping

[4] For example, an article purporting to have been prepared by the Japanese Admiralty, printed in the Japanese supplement of *The Times*, 2 September, 1916, stated that Japanese vessels occupied all the important German strategical positions scattered through the South Seas and thereby deprived the enemy of all his naval bases. A statement of a similar nature occurs in the reports of a speech made by the Hon. W. A. Watt in Melbourne Town Hall shortly after the end of the war. Doubtless all that was intended was a warm expression of appreciation for the loyal assistance afforded by the Empire's ally. Mr. Watt was much too good an Australian to dream of casting an aspersion upon the work of his countrymen in the Australian Navy; but the reference shows how little the doings of the fleet were known even to the best-informed Australians.

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representative (the *Encounter*) had no chance of doing more than locking the stable door long after the mischief had been done. But in a record of the naval war and of the work of the Commonwealth Naval Board the doings of the *Wolf*, and their effect on Australian war-work, must occupy an important position.

It would be easy to make this record dramatic—to ring up the curtain on the mysterious mining of one vessel, the mysterious disappearance of another, the hurried precautions against an unknown danger, the slow piecing together of vague clues and slender evidential threads: and then, in a startling third act (for five-act melodramas are out of fashion), to unveil the triumphant and gloating villain. But for a historical record clarity is of supreme importance; and the only safe course is to follow undeviatingly the adventures of the *Wolf* herself, along whose thread the other adventures and mishaps and disquietudes are disconnectedly strung.

The *Wolf* was originally a cargo-steamer of the Hansa line, 443 feet long, 56 feet in the beam, with a crew of 350 and a registered tonnage of 6,000. Her maximum speed was about 13 knots. When equipped for raiding, she was almost as well-armed as a light cruiser, carrying seven 5.9-inch guns, numerous machine-guns, and four 22-inch torpedo-tubes; she also carried the parts of a seaplane and several hundred mines. Her commander, Karl August Nerger, had commanded a light cruiser at the fight off Heligoland in 1915. On the 10th of November, 1916, she left Kiel for the first time, but was forced by a fire to return almost at once, and in the evening of the 30th—after a second false start in the morning—began the most successful voyage undertaken by any German raider. Passing the Cattegat and hugging the coast of Norway, she made across from Bergen towards Iceland, plunged into storm after storm (which probably saved her from discovery by the British scouts), passed Iceland northabout into the Atlantic, and made her way carefully southwards to the Cape of Good Hope. Her crew, which had dreamt of spectacular raids on trans-Atlantic commerce, was woefully disappointed; but Nerger's orders were definite—"to interfere with the enemy's shipping in distant seas, and above all in the Indian

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Ocean; to wage war on commerce; and to carry out other warlike operations, of which mine-laying was the most important."[5]

On the 16th of January, 1917, the *Wolf* sighted the coast of South Africa, as well as a convoy of six troopships escorted by an armoured cruiser. Edging slowly away to seaward, so as not to excite suspicion, she stood in to the coast towards sunset, and proceeded to lay a mine-field (50 mines) off the approaches to Cape Town. Another (also 50) was laid a few days later off Cape Agulhas; then the *Wolf* stood east and north across the Indian Ocean to the Arabian Sea, and laid a third mine-field (75) a little south of Bombay. Doubling back along the Malabar coast, she laid a fourth (100) off Colombo—and there for the first time caught a victim, the 7,000-ton steamer *Worcestershire*. For the moment, thought Nerger, enough mine-laying had been done, and he might indulge his crew with more exciting work; after all, the *Emden*, with her long list of captured and sunk merchantmen, was still the German sailors' idol. Standing out towards the *Emden's* old hunting-grounds in the Maldives, on the 27th of February he sighted a steamer which perplexed him by its resemblance to his own ship. Capturing her without bloodshed, he solved the puzzle; she was, no doubt, the British oiltank-steamer *Turritella*, but in the days before the war she had been the Hansa cargo-steamer *Gutenfels*, a sister to the *Wachtfels* that was now the *Wolf*. To sink a German vessel seemed a waste, and Nerger, having renamed her *Iltis*, transferred to her a number of mines and sent her off to lay them in the Gulf of Aden.

Working round the Maldives, on the 2nd of March he captured and sank the *Jumna*, which afforded him a good supply of coal. But there his success came for a time to an end; for shortly afterwards an intercepted wireless message disclosed the fact that the *Iltis* had been captured, and a day or two later a full description of the *Wolf*, correct to the smallest detail and even describing the little seaplane (which had been put together during the voyage across the Indian Ocean), was wirelessed from Aden to Colombo. It was

[5] The British Admiralty's translation of Nerger's book—published in 1918—has been drawn on largely in compiling this account of the *Wolf's* cruise.

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evidently time for her to be off. Making a wide sweep across the ocean south-eastwards, round Tasmania and past New Zealand eastabout to the Kermadecs, she spent an unprofitable two months wondering whither the traffic had disappeared. Exactly what traffic she expected to find in those seas is not clear, but Nerger seems to have thought that outward-bound Australian "grain ships and colliers" frequented the Roaring Forties. Between the 2nd of March and the 28th of May two captures only were made—the *Wordsworth,* carrying rice from Rangoon to London, near the Chagos group on the 11th of March; and, far west of the Leeuwin on the 30th of the same month, the sailing vessel *Dee,* in ballast from the Mauritius to Fremantle.

During May the *Wolf* had picked up several wireless messages concerning a schooner, the *Winslow,* which was taking cargo from Sydney to Apia. Towards the end of the month, therefore, while his ship was being overhauled in a bay of the Kermadecs, Nerger regularly sent up the seaplane (the *Wölfchen*) to scout for approaching vessels. On the 28th it sighted a large steamer making eastwards, went after her, dropped a bomb to show what might follow disobedience, and brought her back to the *Wolf.* She was the Union Steamship Company's *Wairuna,* on her way from Auckland to San Francisco, with a valuable general cargo and (what interested Nerger much more) 40 sheep, 350 tons of fresh water, and 1,100 tons of coal. Later she was sunk with a good deal of trouble—two bombs under her keel were ineffective, and it took thirty-six shots to sink her by gun-fire. During the sinking the seaplane brought in another victim, the long-expected *Winslow,* a sailing ship laden with coal and fire-bricks. Once gutted, she too was taken out to be sunk; but when four bombs and thirty-nine shots had failed, Nerger was obliged to set her on fire and let her drive ashore.

Prize-taking was now abandoned for the time, and the *Wolf* resumed her old career as a mine-layer. On the 25th and 26th of June she laid a mine-field (25) off the Three Kings group and Cape Maria van Diemen at the northern end of New Zealand, on the 27th and 28th another (35) off Cape Farewell at the mouth of Cook Strait; then, striking across the Tasman Sea, she began on the 3rd of July to lay a third

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off Cape Howe, but was scared away by the apparition early next morning of what she took to be an Australian cruiser. As the *Encounter* was then lying in Port Phillip, where she had been since the 27th of June, it would seem that the raiders were nervous; the description of the scare given by prisoners aboard the *Wolf* depicts an episode of which Nerger himself makes no mention:—

> At 1 am. on 4th July great excitement took place aboard. Mine-laying was stopped, gun and torpedo doors were dropped, and all the Germans went to stations, and the *Wolf* made off at full speed . . . to the east-south-east, and never again approached the Australian coast. On the following day she hauled up to the northward and continued going northward midway between Australia and New Zealand, then north-eastward towards Norfolk Island.[6]

The immediate result of her Cape Howe mine-laying—the destruction of the *Cumberland*—is dealt with in Section V of this chapter. But it may be mentioned here that the mines laid in Australasian waters certainly accounted for three wrecks—that of the *Cumberland* off Gabo Island, of the *Wimmera* off the Three Kings, and of the *Port Kembla* off Cape Farewell; it is also possible that the disappearance of a small sailing-vessel, the *Handa Isle,* and of the collier *Undola,* was due to mines which drifted from one of these fields. Furthermore it must be here emphasised that the *Cumberland* would not have been lost if her master had obeyed orders and avoided passing through prohibited areas, and that, according to the calculations of hydrographers, the *Wimmera* also was sunk a few miles inside waters which she had been warned to avoid.

To return to the *Wolf*. Not far from Norfolk Island, she picked up two small American prizes—the schooner *Beluga,*

[6] The scare was due to the hearing of Japanese wireless, "frequent and clear." Off Cape Howe two lines of mines were laid, thirty in all. The more northerly line was soon discovered, but the existence of the other was not even suspected till its position was disclosed by the German Government after the Armistice. One of the *Wolf's* prisoners, R. H. J. Alexander (of Waverley, N.S.W.), formerly wireless operator in the *Wairuna,* states in his diary: "All day Tuesday (3 July) mines were being lifted from the mine-chamber to the rails under the poop, preparatory to laying a very large field. . . . When darkness fell she (the *Wolf*) crept in towards the coast, and at about 9.30 p.m. the mines began to go over the side. Thirty-one had been laid when an interruption came; it was probably only a merchant vessel which approached too close to the raider, but the cautious *Wolf* was taking no risks and made off at full speed. . . . The remaining mines were brought down from the main deck to the mine-chamber again. We were running S.E. at full speed all day yesterday (4 July)." The diarist goes on to say that the *Wolf's* aeroplane was, during all this time, lying dismantled, and was not put together again until 10 July. Abundant evidence proves that the story of its flight over Sydney Harbour is completely fictitious.

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from which a supply of petrol was secured for the seaplane, and the timber-carrier *Encore*. What she needed, however, was a collier, and none came along. False alarms still occurred: on one occasion a collier was sighted and chased, and the coal-transhipping gear got ready—when the vessel proved to be nothing more than a frequently spouting whale (this is Nerger's own story). Off Fiji she drew another blank, and swerved north-westwards past the New Hebrides and the Solomons; then, on the 28th of July, an important wireless message was intercepted:—

Burns Philp Rabaul. Donaldson left Sydney on 27th via Newcastle Brisbane, 340 tons general cargo 500 tons Westport coal Rabaul, 236 tons general cargo Madang. Burns.

This promised the much-needed coal, but who or what was Donaldson? Nerger had not long to wait for an answer. On the 29th another intercepted message read:—

7.43 p.m. VHV to VIB. Burns Philp Brisbane. Cape Moreton noon Monday. Donaldson.

Donaldson, therefore, was the master of the vessel whose call-sign was VHV—and a reference to pre-war wireless lists showed that this was the *Matunga*. One of Nerger's officers, who had served aboard the old *Cormoran* in New Guinea waters, knew the *Matunga* well, and a rapid calculation indicated that the 500 tons of Westport coal would be obtainable about the 5th of August. The *Wolf* therefore lay in waiting off Bougainville, and every day the *Wölfchen* went up to warn her of the approach of her prey. The 5th passed without sign of the *Matunga*; but in the evening another message was picked up[7]:—

Burns Philp Rabaul. Arriving Tuesday 2 a.m. Arrange Burrows coal direct. Donaldson.

[7] Here must be discussed the already much-debated question "Why was all this wireless signalling allowed?" There was, of course, no definite knowledge in any Australian department of the near presence of an enemy ship—the loss of the *Cumberland* was still, at the end of July, attributed to an internal explosion. But the Naval Board had always discouraged the use of wireless communications except as a matter of great urgency, and during 1917 had strengthened its restrictions. In July the main regulations on the subject were as follows:—

No private messages will be transmitted to ships by wireless telegraphy. Messages from owners, agents, &c., which have to do with the movements of vessels, or are necessary to prevent delays to shipping, or on similar important subjects, may be accepted, but should be reduced to a minimum.

Wheat-ships and other merchant-vessels are to make no W.T. signals except (i) in emergency, (ii) one signal, if necessary, within 24 hours of making a port to announce time of arrival. The name of the vessel should not be given, the name of the master or some similar indication being used.

The Burns-Philp message of the 28th of July was accepted under the first of these regulations; Rabaul was not connected with Australia by cable, so that all

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This introduced a new complication—who or what was Burrows? After some search it was discovered that a United States destroyer bore that name, and Nerger concluded that this ship must be lying at Rabaul, wherefore it was obviously necessary to trap the *Matunga* farther away from her destination and to gag her before she could use her wireless for warning signals. He accordingly ran down to meet her, swung round when he saw her lights late at night, placed his ship between her and Rabaul, and at dawn on the 6th closed in on her, ordered her to stop, fired a shot across her bows, and sent the *Wölfchen* to hover above her. The surprise was complete, and one of Nerger's fears was soon dispelled. The mysterious "Burrows" was not a warship, but the commander of the *Una*,[8] and the *Una* was away at Madang; so, with reasonable precautions, there was no great danger of interception. The two vessels were therefore taken at a leisurely pace past the eastern coast of New Ireland almost to the equator and then proceeded to Offak Bay in Waigeu Island (between Jilolo and New Guinea), where the *Matunga* was during a fortnight's stay (from the 13th to the 26th of August) relieved of her crew and cargo,[9] and then sunk by bombs exploded in her holds.

Before considering the effect of these exploits of the *Wolf* on the naval situation in Australia, we may summarise the further history of her adventurous voyage. From Offak Bay she passed through the Moluccas into the Java Sea and made for Singapore, where Nerger intended to lay his last mine-field. On the way occurred one of the tensest incidents of the whole voyage.

On the night of September 3rd, when the *Wolf* was steaming up Karimata Strait, between Sumatra and Borneo,

such messages had to be sent by wireless. Donaldson's message to Brisbane of the 20th, and that to Rabaul of the 5th of August, were intended to comply with the second regulation; but it seems to have been forgotten by those on board that a vessel's call-sign is just as informative as her name. The letters "VHV" gave away all the facts that Nerger needed to know—the name, speed, and character of the vessel carrying the Westport coal. Further, although the message of the 29th to Brisbane was the only one then intercepted by the *Wolf*, the regulation was broken and the risks doubled by the sending of a second message to the same station at 9 a.m. on the 30th.

[8] Commr. W. Burrows; R.N.; b. Crediton, Devon, Eng., 4 July, 1883.

[9] Nerger describes a scare that occurred here, that the prisoners were escaping overboard. The searchlight blazed out, star-shell after star-shell was fired, the machine-gunner and riflemen fired madly into the water. He adds that the escape was all pure imagination—the only swimmers were crocodiles.

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a vessel which, from the absence of her lights, the Germans at once suspected to be a cruiser, was seen less than two miles away. The alarm signals went, the German crew ran to its battle-stations. It was beautiful clear moonlight, and the approaching ship stood out clearly against the gleaming water.

> Now I catch sight of her (writes Captain Witschetzky, gunner officer of the *Wolf*[10]). She too has darkened ship—a low, smooth hull, two thin funnels, two masts—an English cruiser of the *Juno* class. She is unmistakable.

The *Wolf* altered course slightly to starboard, but had to pass fairly close to the stranger. Nerger's orders were to take no action unless the other signalled him to stop, but in that case to fire at once all guns that could bear and two torpedo tubes. Accordingly guns and tubes were kept trained on the approaching steamer, the range being taken from the dim light which escaped from some of her ports of which the dead-lights were (so Witschetzky judged) not tightly closed owing to the great heat. Nerger gives the distance of the stranger at 4,000 metres—Witschetzky says 1,500. The Germans were itching to fire, but the vessel passed without a sign that she saw them —the Germans suspected that her attention was concentrated upon a brightly lighted passenger steamer which had for some time been visible on the horizon astern of the *Wolf*.

That night the Australian cruiser *Psyche* was emerging from the Karimata Strait on her way home to pay off. She passed many craft in these waters, but none that aroused her suspicion. Her position was somewhat too southerly to fit in easily with Nerger's account,[11] but no other British cruiser was in that area. If she was the ship seen, the Australians escaped a most formidable fight, for the *Wolf's* armament was far the heavier.

Off Singapore the *Wolf* laid her last mine-field (107) near Anamba Island to intercept the traffic from Chinese ports, and returned on her tracks—somewhat disguised by the lowering of her topmasts and an extension of her funnel—to pass between Lombok and Sumbawa into the Indian Ocean. Running slowly across to the Maldives, on the 26th of September, she captured the Japanese *Hitachi Maru,* which had

[10] *Das schwarze Schiff, p. 243.*

[11] The *Psyche's* noon positions were: Sept. 3—lat. 3° 14′ S., long. 109° 55′ E.; Sept. 4—lat. 5° 25′ S., long. 111° 35′ E.

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to be shelled by the *Wolf* and bombed by the *Wölfchen* before she would stop or silence her wireless; out of fifteen shells fired at pointblank range only four hit her, but these caused thirteen deaths. This vessel Nerger decided to take back with him to Germany, and for five days the two lay in an anchorage of the Maldives, rearranging the now numerous prisoners and apportioning the stores. Then the *Wolf*—which, if she was to take the *Hitachi* to Kiel, badly needed coal—began to cruise across what Nerger seems to have thought were the usual steamer-tracks in the Indian Ocean, east, south, and west-south-west of the Equatorial Channel. From the 3rd to the 20th of October she cruised in vain, gradually working southwards and summoning the *Hitachi* by seapleane to follow her; then in despair she brought the Japanese vessel under the lee of the Cargados Reef (about 300 miles north-north-east of the Mauritius), took over all her coal and as much of her cargo as there was room for, and on the 7th of November sank her as she had sunk the *Matunga*. Three days later, having at last reached the real steamer routes south of the Mauritius, she captured a Spanish collier, the *Igotz-Mendi*, which was taking 6,800 tons of Delagoa Bay coal to Colombo. During a second visit to Cargados the *Wolf* filled up with coal, and the 400 prisoners and the cargo were redistributed. The *Igotz Mendi* received the women, children, and invalids, twenty-one in all, and after leaving the Cargados Reef took a comparatively independent line, occasionally rendezvousing with the *Wolf* to supply her with coal, but being at last left to herself off Iceland about the 5th of February, 1918. For the next fortnight she experienced stormy weather and encountered many icebergs, but came through safely to the Cattegat; there on the 25th she ran ashore on the coast of Denmark near Skagen, and the Danish authorities insisted on the release of the prisoners, who reached London *viâ* Norway and the Shetlands on the 10th of March.

From Cargados the *Wolf* also turned homewards. Through his ignorance of the usual steamer-routes, Nerger appears to have believed that his exploits and his mines had driven Allied shipping off the oceans, and he was content to make for Kiel with as little publicity as possible. On his way

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thither he intercepted three more sailing vessels—the American *John H. Kirby,* carrying a consignment of Ford cars to Natal (Nerger reported them as armoured cars on their way to the fighting in East Africa); the French *Maréchal Davoust,* carrying Australian wheat to Dakar in West Africa; and the Norwegian *Storo Brore,* in ballast, which he sank on the ground that she had originally been a British vessel. Thenceforward he devoted himself to avoiding notice. He took the *Wolf* into the strait between Greenland and Iceland, but was blocked by pack-ice, so coasted Iceland southabout, sighted Norway on the 14th of February, and on the 16th anchored once more in German waters. His prisoners were distributed among various camps, and did not reach England until after the Armistice.

The doings of the *Wolf,* though undoubtedly a source of great annoyance to Allied trade in Eastern waters and (through a series of accidents) especially to Australia, were over-valued in Germany. Nerger was a brave and skilful leader, but he took fifteen months to catch fourteen vessels, most of them small; his mine-fields had to be laid in comparatively shallow water (100 fathoms or less) which vessels were in war-time always warned to avoid. It was, no doubt, a feat to preserve his ship for fifteen months in enemy seas during a voyage of over 64,000 miles: but safety is procurable on easy terms when one persists in haunting unfrequented waters and shunning contact with nine out of every ten vessels sighted. Compared with the *Emden's* twenty-two prizes caught in eight weeks, and the general dislocation of traffic caused by her daring raid, the *Wolf's* achievement is insignificant.[12]

IV

There remains to be considered, however, her influence on Australian affairs, exerted partly through the sinking of the *Cumberland* and partly through the capture of the *Matunga.* For convenience, because the story of this latter capture has just been narrated, its effects will be here dealt with first, though the *Cumberland* affair is chronologically earlier.

[12] The *Wolf's* history may be satisfactorily rounded off with the statement that she is now the Messageries Maritimes cargo-steamer *Antinous,* and her sister vessel, the *Schneefels,* has become the Union Steamship Company's *Wairuna.*

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The first warning of the *Matunga's* loss came from the Administrator at Rabaul[13] on the 8th of August:—

> Wireless received from *Matunga*, that she would arrive Rabaul 2 a.m. August 7th, sent from her August 5th, which would give position 300 to 350 miles off. Now—8 a.m. 8th—30 hours overdue. *Morinda* bound south left Rabaul 9 p.m. 6th, reports nothing seen or heard of *Matunga*.

On the 9th the Administrator reported that the *Morinda* had searched the neighbourhood of the Woodlark group without success, and that the *Meklong* and *Madang* were scouring the seas nearer Rabaul (the *Siar* also was used). The Admiralty, the Commander-in-Chief on the China station, and the Japanese admiral (who was at that moment in Sydney) were of course informed at once of the mishap. The *Una*, which on the 9th was at Madang, took up the search in waters south of New Britain. On the 13th it was decided to inform relatives of the passengers and crew that there was cause for serious anxiety as to the safety of the vessel, and a similar statement was given to the Australian press that evening; lists of the passengers and crew were also published, and free comment was allowed. About the 15th the possibility of raider action began to dawn on the searchers, and attention was called by the Director of the Radio Service to the fatal wireless message sent by the *Matunga* on the 29th of July—and especially to the highly dangerous use of the vessel's call-sign; but the only evidence favouring the raider hypothesis was the complete absence of wreckage in the waters traversed by the searching ships, and public opinion soon began to busy itself with fantastic explanations. Rumours flew about: the *Matunga* had been allowed to leave port in an unseaworthy condition—other vessels had disappeared in those waters without leaving a trace—submarine earthquakes might have raised a wave big enough to engulf her. Every rumour was carefully investigated, however unlikely it might be, and none stood the test. Meanwhile on the 27th the Administrator reported from Rabaul that all searches had proved useless, and on the 29th it was decided to abandon that form of investigation. That very day a report

[13] To avoid misunderstandings, it must be remembered that messages exchanged between Commonwealth officials and departments were always sent in cypher, whereas non-official messages had to be sent in plain language. Only the latter could give away secrets to an enemy.

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came in from the Laughlan Islands[14] that a "large slate-coloured steamer, tall masts, wireless, flush decks, bridge nearly amidships, no other deckhouses," had anchored off the group on the 11th of August and left on the 12th: the *Marsina,* which brought this news, had herself during the evening of the 25th sighted near Adele Island in the Louisiades a similar vessel, which promptly extinguished her lights and made off.

This suggested a fresh explanation of the *Matunga's* disappearance—she had been captured by a raider and transformed into one herself. The "danger area" was at once put out of bounds, especially to colliers, the *Encounter* was summoned from Jervis Bay to Sydney to coal and proceed straight to Samarai, and the Japanese warship *Hirado*—which was at Brisbane—was asked to go straight to New Guinea waters. A warning was also sent to Nauru that any vessels in that neighbourhood should be ordered to the Gilbert group. The *Encounter* obeyed at once; the captain of the *Hirado* filled his bunkers and replenished his stores, at the same time cabling to his admiral—who had gone to New Zealand—for leave to move; a rendezvous was arranged for the two cruisers near Adele Island on the 5th of September. By way of attracting the supposed raider it was further arranged that the *Encounter* should send out wireless messages indicating that she was a Burns-Philp steamer taking up the *Morinda's* running to Rabaul and calling at Woodlark on the way. In Torres Straits the patrol work was intensified, in case the enemy should attempt to escape by that route, and the *Fantome* and *Psyche*—which were due to return to Australia—were despatched from Singapore on the 31st to reach Thursday Island *viâ* the Arafura Sea.

The Japanese Admiral Yamaji could not, however, see his way to let the *Hirado* take part in this combination. In answer to a request, received from him on the 31st, for fuller information, the Naval Board on the same day telegraphed the full story of the *Matunga's* disappearance and called his attention to the similar disappearance of the *Wairuna* and

[14] Also called "Lachlan" and "McLaughlin"; they lie south-east of the Woodlark group.

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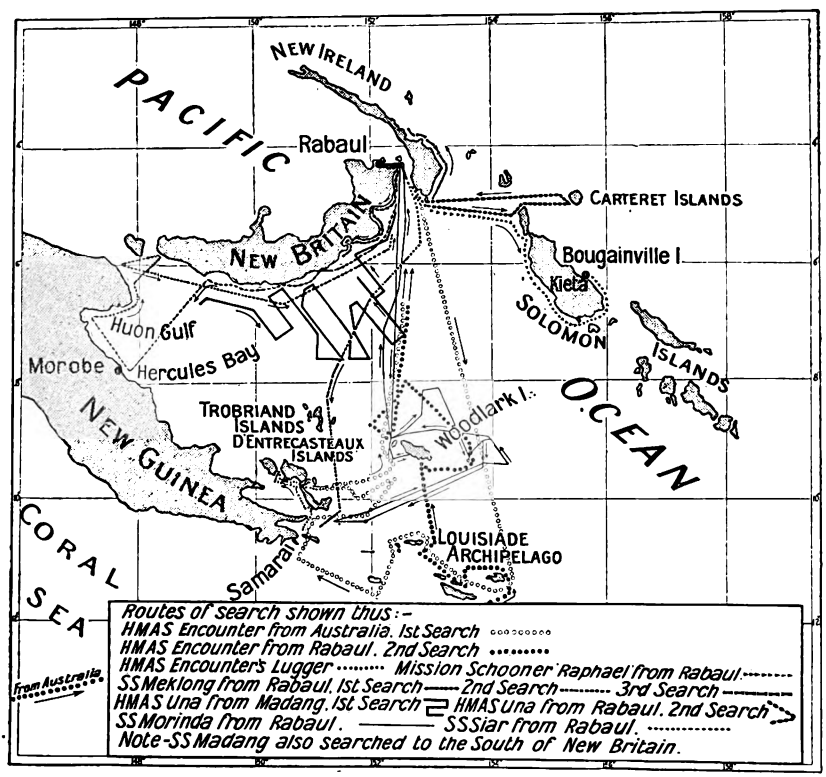
the discovery of three burnt-out American schooners in the Pacific. But the admiral was not convinced that a raider was at work. "So far as I can judge," he telegraphed from Auckland on the 1st of September, "it is yet premature to conclude appearance of raider in Papuan Sea." In a letter



THE SEARCH FOR THE *Matunga*

of September 11th he explained his opinion that the disappearance of the *Wairuna* and the three American schooners was due to accident, and suggested that the *Matunga* might possibly have been lost through an internal explosion. If the existence of a raider in the western Pacific was proved, this would make necessary "an effective search covering a vast area extending from Solomon Islands to New Hebrides

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and also Samoa Islands with all our available forces . . . and also a minute plan of search will be equally necessary to carry this out."

The *Encounter* accordingly carried out the search by herself, and, visiting the Louisiade and Woodlark groups, provisionally identified the mysterious visitor to the Woodlarks with the steamer *Woodbridge*. With the help of the *Una* she completed a thorough investigation of all the groups between Rabaul and Samarai—not with any hope of finding the raider, but in order to discover any confirmatory evidence of her existence. None was found, and the *Matunga's* fate receded into mystery. Not that rumours ceased: in mid-September Darwin was agog with a report that the missing crew was safe in Java, and Brisbane was upset by a story that a local "gang of spies and German sympathisers" had hatched the plot for her capture by an enemy vessel operating from Dutch New Guinea. Sydney varied the Darwin story with details about the recapture of the *Matunga* by a Japanese warship, which had found the passengers "battened down in the hold" and had landed them at Batavia. But enquiry into the sources of these rumours disclosed their baselessness; the naval authorities abandoned for the time all further search, and at the beginning of October the New South Wales superintendent of navigation opened an enquiry which was mainly directed to the question of the *Matunga's* seaworthiness when she left Sydney in July. On the 29th of the month his finding was published. He declared that her seaworthiness was indubitable, all her equipment in good order, and her cargo well stowed; the only suggestions as to her fate worth considering were (*a*) the introduction of an infernal machine among her cargo, for which there was no evidence, (*b*) the hypothesis of a submarine disturbance, rendered futile by the fact that no such disturbance had affected any land in the vicinity, (*c*) capture by a raider—"the prevailing opinion in maritime circles"—about which, having no evidence, he expressed no opinion.

In mid-November, however, came news of a different kind. Tins of oil branded "Voco" (a brand used by the Vacuum Oil Company in Australia) had been washed ashore

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on Jilolo and on an island between Jilolo and New Guinea; several planks and a seaman's chest containing knives also came ashore, and early in December a Marconi box (No. 21,822) marked Rabaul-Sydney. These might very well be from the *Matunga;* but it was at first thought that they might be wreckage carried by the currents from the neighbourhood of New Ireland, where she had disappeared. In January the truth was out:—

> "Bottle found in sea 9th December off Toli Toli, Celebes, by natives contained two papers forwarded to me by Consul-General Batavia. First (begins) Prisoners on board German raider. Will finder please notify British authorities that German raider passed Celebes this day 29th August on her way we presume to mine Singapore, Pedra Blanca, having previously mined Cape Town, Bombay, Colombo, North Cape, New Zealand, Cook Strait, Gabo Island. Crews of following vessels are on board: *Turritella, Jumna, Wordsworth, Dee, Wairuna, Winslow, Beluga, Encore, Matunga.* She has on board 110 mines, to mine, we think, Rangoon, Calcutta. She was formerly *Wachenfels* (*sic*) of German merchant service (ends). Second paper is a descriptive drawing of vessel, three-island type, one funnel, two masts, several 6-inch guns, 2 on forecastle, 2 on broadsides, 1 on poop, 4 torpedo-tubes 18 inches."

This message was received from the Commander-in-Chief on the China station on the 15th of January. With the Admiralty's permission all relatives of the prisoners were at once informed that the *Matunga* had been captured by a raider, but there was no reason to suppose that any deaths had occurred among either passengers or crew. The Admiralty stipulated, however, that the facts should not be published and the press should not be informed.[15]

[15] Unfortunately the military censors misinterpreted this instruction, and informed the press of the capture officially in a "confidential" document; hence arose a good deal of friction, and the Naval Board was severely criticised (not only by the journalists but even by the censorship authorities) for attempting to carry out definite orders from London. In a world war, however, the necessity for a central authority cannot for a moment be questioned.

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A month later, on the 26th of February, the German Government uttered its cockcrow of triumph:—

> The auxiliary cruiser *Wolf*, commanded by Captain Nerger, has returned from the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific Oceans with 400 members of crews of sunken ships, including white and coloured British military men. She has also on board several captured guns and great quantities of valuable raw materials, rubber, copper, brass, zinc, cocoa beans and copra, worth many millions of marks.

Promptly the Admiralty published the list of captures, adding the *Hitachi Maru* and *Igotz Mendi* to the names mentioned in the bottle message. And with the return to England of the *Igotz Mendi's* ex-prisoners the episode ended.

V

The disappearance of the *Matunga* puzzled Australians and led to a good deal of search- and patrol-work. The sinking of the *Cumberland,* which is now to be dealt with, had far more wide-reaching effects.

On the 6th of July, 1917, the s.s. *Cumberland,* carrying mails and cargo for southern Australian ports and for Europe, reported that she had struck a mine ten miles off Gabo Island, was sinking, and required assistance. A subsequent report stated that an internal explosion had occurred in No. 2 hold, and that the vessel was attempting to reach Gabo. The Naval Board at once despatched the *Encounter* (which happened to be in Port Phillip) to the *Cumberland's* help, and telegraphed to the Japanese warship *Chikuma*—which with her consort the *Hirado* was at Jervis Bay—asking her also to render aid. The *Chikuma* at once made for Gabo, leaving Jervis Bay at 1.45 p.m. and covering the 160 miles in nine hours against a heavy southern swell. Meanwhile the *Cumberland* had struggled towards land, and by 3.30 p.m. had anchored off Gabo in seven fathoms with about 30 feet of water in her No. 1 hold (where the hole was), 12 feet in No. 2, and a steady inflow of 18 inches per hour. She thought of beaching, but the coast-line was unfavourable; the Board wirelessed her to make for Twofold Bay if possible, and suggested that the *Chikuma* on arrival might lend her mats and sails to check the inrush of water.

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During the evening, however, it was found that No. 1 hold had 38 feet of water and No. 2 17 feet; the vessel was also heeling over 21 degrees to port, and the crew decided to abandon her for the time. At this moment the *Chikuma* arrived, approved of the crew's action, and anchored about 800 yards away. In the morning of the 7th a thorough inspection was made by the Japanese admiral in company with the master of the vessel, and during the day a Japanese diver examined the hole made by the explosion; the vessel was now well aground and had lost her heel, while the comparative smoothness of the sea made salvage work easy. Mailbags, Red Cross comforts, and the 6-pounder gun with which the vessel was armed, were at first removed to the *Chikuma*; the main cargo was left aboard. Unfortunately the diver who examined the damage came to a misleading conclusion. The results of his report to his commander were so far-reaching that it must be discussed here, along with subsequent reports, in order to explain the Naval Board's later action.

The earliest news from the *Cumberland* was that a mine had been struck. But Admiral Yamaji's despatch to the Board put another face on the matter:—

> ". . . Damage to *Cumberland* found by my diver is one large hole measuring about 11 feet into 20 feet extending vertically from No. 2 plate to No. 5 plate counting from keel in line of after portside end of gallant forecastle. . . . There is some indentation and rivets off on starboard side opposite to portside big hole. . . . Her large hole on portside was opening outside, and this fully illustrates that her explosion occurred from inside and not from outside."

On this evidence the Japanese admiral naturally concluded that the damage "was not caused by striking mine as first supposed." So strongly was he impressed by the belief that the sinking of the *Cumberland* had been caused by an explosive treacherously secreted aboard her that he ordered all the *Cumberland's* mailbags and Red Cross matter to be removed

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from the *Chikuma* to the shore, in case they might contain a hidden explosive. His opinion naturally had great weight with the Board; and from this belief in an internal explosion was developed all the elaborate mechanism for intercepting bombs that might be intended to blow up other freighters. But in wartime the most expert of opinions demands fuller investigation. On the very day of the explosion an enquiry was set on foot under Major Jones,[16] Director of the Investigation Branch of the Federal Attorney-General's office, which accumulated evidence both from examination of the ship and from the various ports at which she had taken on cargo. The essential conclusions of Major Jones's report are given in Appendix No. 21; summarised, they were that the Japanese diver had been misled by the haste with which his observations were necessarily made; that all the later evidence showed that the placing of a bomb at the point within the vessel where the explosion occurred was practically impossible, and that a thorough investigation of the damage by five Australian divers, and examination of a detached fragment of plate by experts in Sydney, afforded convincing proof that the *Cumberland* had struck a mine. But this report was not made until the end of September, and meanwhile the mechanism at the various ports had been so elaborated that it was simpler to maintain than to destroy it.

To return to the *Cumberland* herself. In the afternoon of the 7th of July the *Franklin* arrived from Jervis Bay and the *Encounter* from Port Phillip, and the *Chikuma* accordingly proceeded to Sydney to take up her own programme of duties. Under the supervision of the *Encounter* salvaging operations proceeded until the morning of the 11th, when it was reported that the vessel had been refloated. About 4 p.m. an attempt was made to tow her to Twofold Bay; but, when twenty-three miles had been covered, the inrush of water into hold No. 1 became unmanagable, and the *Cumberland* went down.

[16] Maj. H. E. Jones, O.B.E. Director, Investigation Branch, Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department, since 1917; of Hawthorn, Vic.; b. Beveridge, Vic., 22 Aug., 1878.

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On the receipt of Major Jones's report the Naval Board, though still expressing the opinion that the *Cumberland* was sunk by an internal explosion, resolved that "the sweeping of the area is the best aid to determining the question." Accordingly several trawlers were commissioned at Sydney with crews from the recently established "mine-sweeping section" of the Royal Australian Naval Brigade, and, on the 8th of October, 1917, Lieutenant-Commander Ranken[17] with the *Koraaga* and *Gunundaal* began the sweep. Next day they picked up a mine; on the 12th another; and on the 15th the news of the discovery of the mine-field was made public. It appeared that the field lay some five miles south of Gabo Island; the mines were oval in shape, 4 ft. 6 in. long by 2 ft. 7 in. wide, constructed of ¼-inch steel to carry about 200 lb. of T.N.T., and were detonated whenever anything struck one of the five horns which adorned their tops.[18] They were set to lie 22½ feet beneath the surface, and were anchored in 55 to 70 fathoms of water, so that the *Cumberland* would never have struck one had she obeyed the instructions given to her at Sydney—to keep outside the 100-fathom line.[19]

The sweeping of this mine-field was continued by the *Gunundaal, Koraaga, Brolga,* and *Cecil Rhodes,*[20] and by the

[17] Commr. F. J. Ranken, O.B.E.; R.N.R. Master mariner; of Sydney and London; b. Saltram Station, Bathurst, N.S.W., 18 June, 1864. Died 1 Sept., 1929.

[18] One of the first mines located was brought ashore at Gabo and there destroyed. The T.N.T., being sodden with water admitted through bullet-holes, refused to explode, and the case, damaged only by the explosion of the primer, is now in the Australian War Memorial Museum.

[19] According to the calculations of hydrographic experts the *Wimmera* also, when sunk, was within the 130-fathom line, which ships working between Sydney and Auckland were ordered—"wherever possible on any coast"—to avoid. It is interesting to note, as an example of the attitude of a section of the press towards the naval administration, that directly the mine-field was discovered the Navy Office was attacked without any evidence for allowing "some steamer purporting to be friendly" to strew mines broadcast along the Australian coast.

[20] At first under Lieut.-Commr. Ranken; afterwards Lieut. R. Ashburner (of Wahroonga, N.S.W.).

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3rd of January, 1918, thirteen mines (including that which sank the *Cumberland*) had been discovered; it was believed that two others had been caught in the sweeps but lost again, making fifteen in all. As by the 12th of February no more had been retrieved, sweeping was then stopped, and the trawlers returned to their owners; but ships were still warned to keep outside the 100-fathom line in view of the possibility of further mine-laying. The Admiralty, on being informed, expressed the opinion that it was very improbable that all mines had been accounted for, and recommended that sweeping should continue.

When the first mines were discovered the Admiralty had informed the Naval Board that the total number laid might amount to fifty, but was probably less. The statements of prisoners from the *Wolf* subsequently led the Naval Board to believe that seventeen was the actual number. After the trawlers had been dispensed with, the presence of mines which had broken adrift was proved by one being washed up at Falmouth in the north-east of Tasmania on the 21st of February, and another sunk north-east of Sydney two months later. On the 6th of May the s.s. *Ceduna* reported having passed a submerged mine near Gabo, and on the 11th of August two were seen by the steamer *Kilbaha,* which towed one of them into Twofold Bay and there destroyed it. By the 29th of August three other reports had come in, the steamer *Wyreema* bringing definite news of two mines, now apparently adrift and afloat, which she had passed near the danger area. Another sweep was accordingly ordered, and was carried out between the 30th of September and 18th of October by the *Gunundaal* and the tug *Champion.* No mines being retrieved the sweep was then abandoned, and an order was issued allowing colliers and vessels drawing less than 15 feet to pass close to Gabo, the heavier ships keeping outside the 130-fathom line. Three weeks after the completion of this sweep a mine was discovered and sunk by the steamer *Bodalla* off Moruya. After the cessation of hostilities, which occurred four days later, the Naval Board (on the 20th of November) asked the Admiralty whether definite information concerning mine-fields could be obtained from German charts. The reply stated that the charts showed thirty mines, laid in

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two fields, one of which, previously quite unsuspected, lay off Cape Everard, a short distance to the south-west of Gabo Island. The Naval Board, trusting the previous report that only seventeen mines had been laid, and believing that all these had been accounted for, at first construed this information as indicating merely the intention of the German raider, who was understood to have left those waters hurriedly, before her work was complete; the Admiralty, however, being further questioned on December 12th, replied that the Germans definitely stated that two fields, each of fifteen mines, had been laid.

A sweep of the specified area off Cape Everard was accordingly at once organised, the steamer *Coogee* and tug *James Paterson* being thus employed from the 1st to the 26th of January, 1919, but no mine was discovered. On the 23rd of February, however, a drifting mine was destroyed six miles from Cape Everard by the steamer *Aeon*. The position now was that, of the eighteen mines hitherto discovered, only two—and those adrift—could be definitely attributed to the Cape Everard mine-field, almost all the remainder having certainly belonged to that off Gabo Island. A new search was therefore ordered, and was carried out by the *Protector,* with an "Actæon sweep" from the 10th of March to the 4th of April. Again it was resultless, and on the 16th of April restrictions on shipping passing Cape Everard were therefore raised. Two months later, however, there was seen from the shore near Cape Everard a drifting mine which shortly afterwards exploded itself on Clinton Rocks. Shipping was accordingly warned. At this time there were *en route* to New Zealand some British sloops, sent by the Admiralty to sweep the New Zealand mine-fields and thereafter to be presented by Great Britain to the Commonwealth for the training of Australian personnel in mine-sweeping. The Australian Naval Board now proposed to the Admiralty that these ships, after completing their task in New Zealand waters, should re-sweep the Cape Everard mine-field. This was done by the *Marguerite, Geranium,* and *Mallow* between the 8th and 20th of September. The ships worked three-abreast on a front of four and a half

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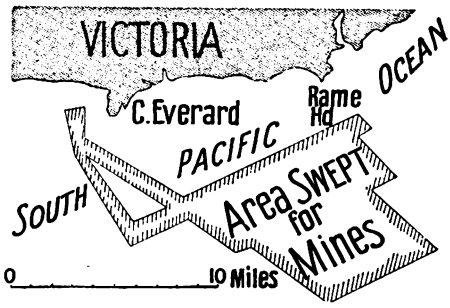
cables, and secured one mine. In all, twenty-two had then been accounted for in Australian waters. The wire moorings of the others had probably long since parted, and both mined areas were, therefore, on the 24th of September declared to be clear, but masters were warned to navigate with caution and keep a good look-out against this danger. Four mines were subsequently found—one off Cape Everard in October; another off Dove Island in Torres Straits in December, 1919; a third in February, 1920, on the beach near Camden Haven Headland; and the last in February, 1921, on the beach at Noosa Heads, Tewantin, Queensland.[21] Thanks to the strict orders given by the naval authorities, which the *Cumberland* disobeyed, Australian shipping suffered only that single casualty through the *Wolf's* mine-laying.



Besides her mine-fields the *Wolf* left another inconvenient legacy. When Nerger early in 1918 published his bombastic account of his ship's achievements, he included a good deal of rodomontade about the *Wölfchen*. Most of it had a foundation in fact, for the little seaplane had done excellent service; but it was the wholly inaccurate account of a mythical trip over Port Jackson that in the eyes of the Australian public outweighed all the rest. Promptly the public imagination reacted to this Nergerism, and mythical aeroplanes began to appear all over southern Australia. Between the 21st of March and the 23rd of April no less than twenty-six aeroplanes and eight suspicious signals were reported to the Navy Office—one or two over Port Jackson (one was genuine, the aeroplane coming from the Richmond aerodrome), several

[21] It has been suspected that some of these came from the New Zealand mine-field. A list of the mines found in Australian waters is given in *Appendix No. 26*. Of the 60 mines laid near New Zealand, 20 appear to have been swept up in 1917; 8 were washed ashore in 1918 (one of these, at Tuarangi Point, exploded and killed three Maoris), and 4 in 1919. Sixteen others were found or known to have exploded, 48 in all being thus accounted for. It is assumed that the remainder have long since drifted ashore on obscure beaches or perished.

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in the neighbourhood of Port Phillip, some far inland. From the Mallee district of Victoria an excited policeman on one occasion reported two aeroplanes flying together. Every report had to be investigated; most were easily dismissed as worthless, and of those that demanded serious research not one was established; but the work of investigation, which was necessarily urgent and hurried, and might begin at any hour of the day or night, weighed heavily on the few naval officers who were available for it.

VI

The *Wolf* was not the only German raider that ventured into Pacific waters. Late in 1916 Count Felix von Luxner, who had previously served under his cousin in the notorious raider *Moewe,* volunteered to take command of a raiding expedition. He was given his choice of vessels, and selected a British cargo-carrier, the *Pass of Balmaha,* which had already had her share of adventures. When war broke out, her British owners placed her on the United States register, intending to use her for carrying contraband to Scandinavian ports; during her first voyage, however, she was caught by a British cruiser, put in charge of a small prize-crew, and ordered to report at a Scottish port, but was almost immediately captured by a German submarine and taken into Hamburg. Von Luxner spent much care and money on her. He re-named her the *Seeadler*; fitted her with 1200-horse-power Diesel oil-engines, two 4-inch guns, two torpedo-tubes, several motor-launches and a good supply of rifles, automatic pistols, bombs, and dynamite; enveloped the whole transaction in deep mystery, alleging to his friends that she was to become an instruction-school for submarines' crews; and disguised her as a Norwegian timber-vessel so thoroughly that she even carried Norwegian phonograph records. He had his reward. On the 21st of December she was sent off into the Atlantic, and on Christmas Day was examined by a British cruiser and let go as an authentic neutral. Two days later the lumber was thrown overboard, the guns were mounted, and the raiding begun.

For a long time she lay in waiting in the comparatively narrow belt of ocean between West Africa and Brazil, picking

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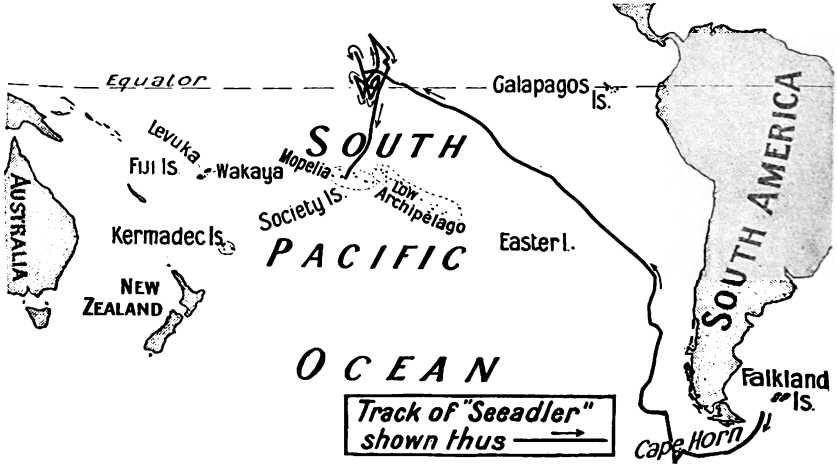
up careless cargo-vessels and avoiding British cruisers by an adroit study of their wireless signals. She caught in all



thirteen vessels—three large English steamers, two British wheat-carrying sailing-ships, a Canadian schooner, five French sailing-ships, an Italian, and a Dane. But the disappearance of these vessels was noted, and it soon became apparent to the British Intelligence Service that a raider was at work and moving southwards; cruisers in the Falklands area were warned, and von Luxner found it advisable to make round Cape Horn for the Pacific. He had been told by the master of a captured vessel that copra was badly needed by the British for the manufacture of munitions, and hoped to distinguish himself by holding up the copra traffic; unfortunately for him he did not know where copra was to be found, and could get no news of the movements of shipping in the Pacific.[22] After coasting South America to Peru, he made westward towards the equator, passing about 400 miles south of the Galapagos. Reaching the equator about 1,200 miles west of the South American coast, he scouted along it. In all this cruising the best he could do was to capture three sailing vessels from the United States bound for Sydney, and the discovery a short time later of their floating

[22] This was largely due to the strict censorship exercised by the Australian Naval Board over Pacific shipping news (*see ch. xiv.*).

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wreckage put every Allied warship in the ocean on the alert. Von Luxner now thought it advisable to give his men a short rest on shore, and with that intention made for the little island of Mopelia in the Society group. There on the 2nd of August a sudden squall put his ship on the reef, and it was only after surmounting great difficulties that he was able to salvage his boats, stores, and wireless apparatus. The *Seeadler* was eventually destroyed by fire. On the 21st of August von Luxner with two officers and three sailors went off in a motor-launch towards Fiji (by this time he had discovered where copra was obtainable) in the hope of catching a copra vessel—preferably an American—unawares, and under the United States colours making his way back to Germany. On his way he called in at a little island in the Lau group, took what stores he needed, and left an acknowledgment signed "Max Pemberton."

About the middle of September news came to the Levuka police that a strange motor-launch was lying at Wakaya, a small island not far north. Sub-Inspector Hills, with half-a-dozen Fijian police, at once started for Wakaya in a cutter, but could not make way against the strong head-wind, and returned to Levuka. There meanwhile had arrived the *Amra*, a coasting steamer usually employed in the cattle trade; Hills requisitioned her and went back to Wakaya, where he saw the launch making for the opening in the reef. Leaving the *Amra* off the opening, Hills lowered a boat, pulled alongside the launch, and with an empty revolver forced its crew to surrender by the threat that otherwise his ship's guns would blow them out of the water. It was not till the prisoners were safely under guard aboard the *Amra* that they discovered she had no guns at all. In the launch were captured a machine-gun of the latest type (1916), a number of rifles, automatic pistols, bombs and detonators, as well as the *Seeadler's* log and charts and von Luxner's diary.

After the first excitement in Levuka had died down, the *Amra* was manned with forty local militia—two machine-gun sections—and sent off to Mopelia to deal with the rest of the *Seeadler's* crew. But these had meanwhile, on the 5th of September, captured (with another of their motor-launches)

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the French vessel *Lutèce,* left their prisoners on the island, and set off for the South American coast; calling in at Easter Island, they were picked up by a Chilean vessel and landed in Chile, where they disappeared. As for von Luxner, he was interned at Motuhihi, escaped in the prison-commandant's launch, and made for the Kermadecs to obtain food; there he was caught by the cableship *Iris* (which during the war carried guns) and returned to more secure internment in New Zealand.

While the capture of von Luxner was entirely the work of Fijian volunteers, it gave rise to more widespread operations and the employment of Australian and Japanese warships. On the 22nd of September the Governor of Fiji informed the Naval Board that von Luxner had been taken, and next day news came to hand that a suspicious motor-launch had been sighted off the Cook Islands. This news was of course repeated to the Admiralty, which on the 24th ordered that "a cruiser" should be sent to Fijian waters to hunt down the remainder of the *Seeadler's* crew, and suggested the use of the *Encounter* or one of the Japanese cruisers. The *Encounter* was at the moment still engaged in searching for the *Matunga* off the coast of New Guinea, and the other available Australian cruiser, the *Brisbane,* was at Fremantle. The Board at once ordered the *Brisbane* to join the *Encounter* and use Tulagi in the Solomons as a base from which both ships would patrol the western Pacific. At the same time Admiral Yamaji, who was in Sydney, was asked to allow the *Hirado* to proceed to Fiji. He replied on the 26th that he would take both his ships to Suva, sending the *Hirado* round by the New Hebrides to search that group; and offered to extend the search from Suva to the Eastern groups and Friendly Islands. This extension, however, he afterwards found it inconvenient to carry out, and it was eventually undertaken by the *Encounter.* The consequent delay caused some anxiety, but affords an instance of problems that almost inevitably arise in the operations of Allies.

The *Fantome,* which was then being refitted after her arduous work in Malaysia, was hurriedly made ready for

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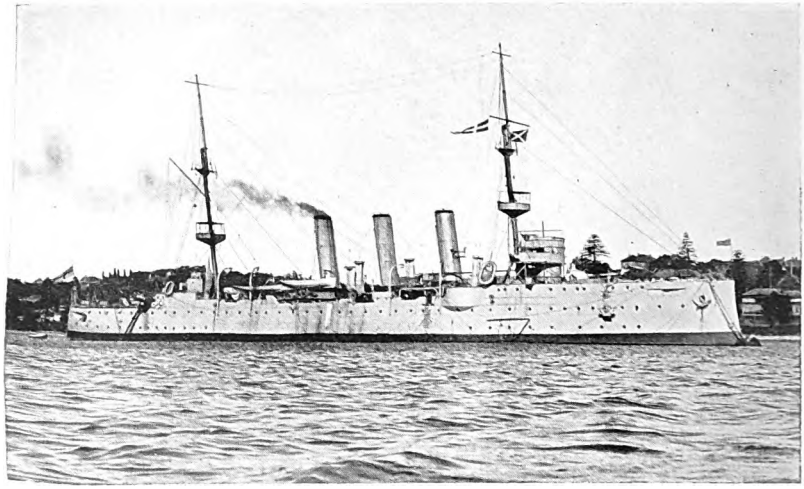
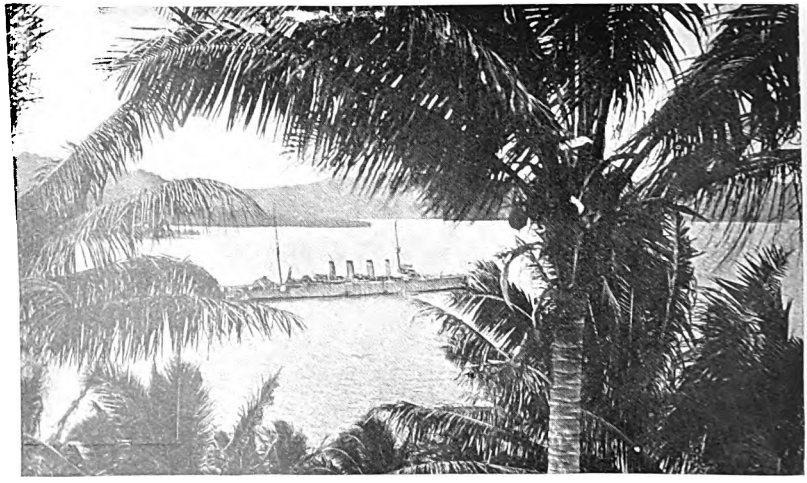


H.M.A.S. *Encounter*

Taken by W. A. Shearon, Esq.



H.M.A.S. *Brisbane* AT TULAGI, SOLOMON ISLANDS, 1917

To face p. 369.

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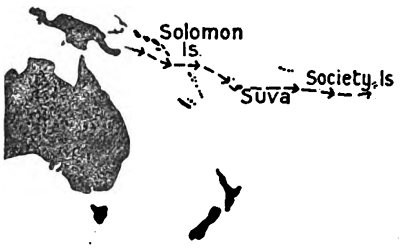
sea, and on the 27th she was despatched to Suva to patrol Fijian waters while the *Encounter* went off to Mopelia. The *Una,* from Käwieng as base, patrolled the Bismarck Archipelago, incidentally obtaining important information concerning German intrigues on the border of Dutch New Guinea; the *Brisbane* from Tulagi guarded the Solomons; the *Psyche,* recommmissioned on the 20th of November, took up patrol work on the coast of Queensland; and thus, with very inadequate means, Australia guarded her own Pacific trade-routes with her own ships. In December the *Encounter* was recalled to Sydney to refit, and the *Fantome* extended her patrols to cover the area between Fiji and Tahiti.



Track of Encounter shown thus - - →

VII

Here, perhaps, is the place for a short notice of the work done by two Australian warships in the Pacific, which, though not in itself war-work, had to be taken over by Australian ships because other war-craft were absorbed elsewhere. Among the normal duties of the smaller British cruisers on the China or Pacific station is that of preserving order in the islands (it may be remembered that Andrew Fisher, in 1909, had offered to take over this police-duty as part of the Australian contribution to Imperial naval defence).[23] And of all the island groups—probably because it does not belong definitely to any Great Power, but is the subject of an ill-defined "joint protectorate" under Britain and France—the New Hebrides is the most disorderly. It is, therefore, perhaps surprising that only twice in the disturbed war-years was it found necessary to despatch punitive expeditions to that group.

As early as April, 1915, the Imperial Government had asked the Naval Board to man the *Fantome,* in order that

[23] *See p. xxviii.*

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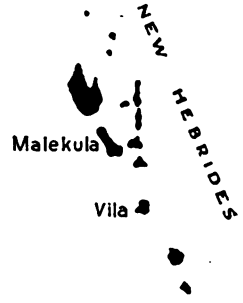
under a British naval officer she might join a French warship in maintaining the patrol of the New Hebrides. Before, however, any definite steps could be taken in this direction, the situation in Persia became dangerous,[24] and the *Fantome* was ordered to the Persian Gulf (which, as has been explained above, she never reached). In August, 1916, a murder on Malekula emphasised the urgent need for patrolling; several unredressed cases of kidnapping on that island had roused the natives—who were passively hostile to Europeans in the most favourable circumstances, and had, in spite of the Anglo-French convention, managed to acquire Winchester and Snider rifles with plenty of ammunition—to call attention to their wrongs by killing somebody; they therefore slaughtered a British planter, one Bridges, and several half-caste children of French nationality. A punitive expedition was ordered out, Australia sending the *Una* on behalf of Britain to accompany the French gunboat *Kersaint*. On the 10th of October the *Una* left Rabaul for Vila with two officers and ten men of the New Guinea native police, joining the *Kersaint* on the 22nd; the expedition was a complicated affair: it consisted of detachments from the warships and from the British and French police, each composed of four men under its own commander, and all directed by the two Resident Commissioners and the *Una's* and *Kersaint's* captains acting jointly. Having landed on Malekula, it indulged in some bush fighting; the known loss on the native side was eight killed, but the true loss was probably greater, and the murderer's village was burnt. The expedition's casualties included one Australian sailor wounded, two New Guinea police killed, and five French native police killed and one wounded. The expedition was then abandoned, the warships returned to Vila, and Commander Jackson of the *Una* and 40 per cent. of his crew went down with malaria. Commander Burrows was sent over in haste to replace Jackson, and brought the *Una* back to Sydney on the 26th of November.



[24] *See p. 214.*

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The second expedition was less unlucky. Again it was the Malekula natives who had grievances to air, and aired them with a killing—this time of a French planter (or trader, according to one account)—towards the end of September, 1918. The *Kersaint* was not within reach, but the *Fantome* was at Suva and was at once ordered to Vila. After consultation with the Residents it was decided to land an expedition at Malua Bay; and on the 6th of October sixty-five officers and men from the *Fantome,* six French settlers, and eighteen armed native guides, accompanied by the French Resident and led by the commander of the *Fantome,*[25] climbed a 300-foot cliff—dragging with them a couple of Maxim guns—and seized a spur commanding the village of Malua, where the murderers were believed to live. A French settler went forward to parley with the natives, hoping to procure the peaceful surrender of the culprits, but it was then seen that on other heights also commanding the village were clusters of armed tribesmen from the interior. A dramatic colloquy at long range ensued; the intruders shouted to the Malua folk threats that anyone who surrendered would be fired on, and it soon became clear that Malua was innocent and the guilty men were among the clamorous visitors. Accordingly fire was opened on them, and, after a sharp raking with the Maxims which killed a dozen or more, the young Australian detachment from the *Fantome* cleared the ridges. The French Resident now gave it as his opinion that sufficient punishment had been inflicted—an opinion confirmed by the fact that the expedition while on its way back to the boats was free from the usual sniping.

VIII

From the beginning of the war patrolling had been an essential part of Australian coastal defence. The *Pioneer,* before she was called away to East Africa, had patrolled the north-west coasts, which, owing to their remoteness from the populated areas, and the lack of even small trading centres within their limits, were the most defenceless and unvisited part of the continent. In 1915-17 the *Encounter* and such destroyers as might be from time to time available visited

[25] Capt. J. F. Robins; R.A.N.

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coastal ports, the *Una* (and at first the *Fantome*) taking over responsibility for New Guinea waters; the *Encounter* also paid occasional visits to Fiji and one to Fanning Island. But the events of 1917 made necessary a more definite system of coastal patrol, and in February two destroyers were set to patrol Bass Strait, while the *Encounter* kept watch off Fremantle; at the same time the existing motor-boat patrol in Torres Straits was strengthened by sending thither an armed yacht, the *Sleuth* (previously the private yacht *Ena*), which was commissioned on the 13th of January and entered on her duties on the 15th of March. The subsequent work of these coastal patrols up to the end of 1917 has been incidentally narrated above, but this is a convenient place for a short account of the Australian doings of the *Brisbane* in that year.

The *Brisbane* had been despatched to the Mediterranean *viâ* Singapore in December, 1916, had been sent back to the Indian Ocean early in 1917 to assist in the search for an unknown raider which followed on the capture of the *Turritella,* had scoured that ocean vainly (employing a seaplane with useful results), and in June had been detached by the Admiralty from the East Indies Squadron and sent back, according to promise,[26] to guard the Western Australian coast. During the *Seeadler* incident, as has already been said, she was ordered in haste to the Solomons, and on the 19th of October reached Tulagi and began to organise an elaborate patrol-system in those waters. "The ideal method," reported Cumberlege, who was in command, "of watching this part of the world would be by seaplane; the smallest type could always find smooth water from which to operate,"[27] but no seaplanes were available—then or later—and he had to be content with a few schooners fitted with wireless apparatus. His original intention was to erect several low-powered wireless stations at suitable spots on the islands, but local conditions thwarted him:—

The wireless system I have inaugurated in the schooners bids fair to be eminently satisfactory. It is quite evident that the small

[26] *See p. 339.*

[27] Cumberlege, no doubt, after his experience with a seaplane in the Indian Ocean, repeatedly advocated their use in the defence of Australia. In June, 1918, while on coastal patrol off northern Queensland, he visited Torres Straits and "spent Wednesday in searching for suitable sites for aeroplane work, and found two admirable places. Torres Straits could be swept by aeroplanes with the greatest facility. The climatic conditions are most favourable . . .

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portable sets, if erected on shore, would have been practically of no use, the curious conditions of scenery rendering abortive any attempts at signalling. But erected as they are in the schooners, these vessels are able to make an offing and get their communications through with celerity and ease.

Having established a satisfactory local patrol, Cumberlege in January, 1918, extended his sphere of action to Nauru and the Gilbert group, from which a severe drought was reported; he found at Ocean Island "coconut trees dying, but everything otherwise quite satisfactory," and returned to Sydney *viâ* Suva.

In 1918 the news of the *Wolf's* doings of the year before, the possibility that Germany might get a successor to her through the blockade, and the widespread rumours concerning enemy aeroplanes—too numerous to be neglected, however unlikely—made it advisable to establish a more thorough system of patrols. The lack of warships was made up for, as far as possible, by commissioning a number of small craft, which could at any rate give warning of an enemy's approach, and by resuscitating the older warships, however inefficient. Thus during the greater part of 1918 the Australian coast was guarded as follows:—

Cooktown to Sydney ..	*Sleuth* (to June), *Mourilyan* (thenceforward), and a motor-boat.
Torres Straits ..	*Brisbane* (to October).
Sydney to Cape Howe	*Protector* (to July).
Bass Strait ..	*Coogee* (from May onwards).
Port Phillip ..	*Countess of Hopetoun.*
Spencer Gulf ..	*Gayundah* (to mid-July), *Protector* (thenceforward).
Western Australia ..	*Encounter* (April-July), *Gannet* (thenceforward), and two ketches (between Broome and Wyndham).
New Guinea waters ..	*Sumatra* (to April), *Una* (thenceforward).

any ships thinking to close the straits with a view to passing through by night could be located very simply by aeroplane during the daytime. . . . . I am aware there are no seaplanes available, or would suggest their use as being preferable to land machines, owing to the calm surface of the sea to be found practically anywhere in this neighbourhood."

But aeroplanes also were lacking.

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In Moreton Bay there was established a patrol by privately-owned motor-boats. Towards the end of the year the *Encounter* cruised regularly between Fremantle and Sydney.

The armament of these patrol-vessels was scarcely adequate for safety, but was quite as much as they could carry. The *Sleuth* carried a 3-pounder gun, the *Sumatra* a 12-pounder; the *Coogee* was given a 4.7-inch gun and two 3-pounders, the *Mourilyan* a 4.7-inch gun and two 12-pounders. An extract from the *Mourilyan's* report will give some idea of the nature of her work:—

October 21st. 1 p.m. Left Thursday Island pier and proceeded *viâ* Ellis Channel between Tuesday and Wednesday Islands, east of Travers Island, to Banks Island, anchoring off St. Paul's Mission Station at 5 p.m.

October 22nd. Landed parties. Interviewed Rev. G. Luscombe, missionary. 2.30 p.m. weighed and proceeded east of Jervis Reef, anchoring off Jervis Island at 4.30 p.m.

October 23rd. Landed parties. Mr. W. Minnis, schoolmaster, interviewed. 4 p.m. weighed and proceeded east of Jervis Reef and Banks Island to anchorage in Banks Channel. 7 p.m. anchored.

October 24th. 8.30 a.m. weighed and proceeded, anchoring east of Clarke Island (Banks Channel) at 10 a.m. Landed party on south-east corner of Mulgrave Island at Dogai. Mr. F. W. Walker, of Papuan Industries, Ltd., and Mrs. Zahel (schoolmistress) interviewed. Examined Clarke Island.

October 25th. 9 a.m. weighed and proceeded *viâ* Banks Channel, east of Torres Reefs, Prince of Wales Channel and Normanby Sound. 2 p.m. arrived Thursday Island.

This was one of five rounds made between the 9th of September and the 9th of November, during which thirteen persons were interviewed and fourteen parties landed to examine uninhabited areas. As usual in such naval operations, nothing was found and no information of any value obtained. That fact does not in any way lessen the importance of the patrol, though it did, no doubt, emphasise its monotony. The point is stressed here, as it was in the chapter dealing with the Malaysian operations, because both the public and the men themselves are apt to over-value the spectacular side of naval work. Ninety-nine parts in a hundred of that work are hopelessly unspectacular, and all the more valuable therefor; and the men who devote themselves to a naval career, while they must expect long periods of tedium, should not on that account miss their due of gratitude and praise.

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CHAPTER XII

THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVAL BRIGADE

THE foregoing narrative has been almost entirely concerned with the doings of the Commonwealth's sea-going forces. There remains to be considered a great deal of very valuable service, carried out for the most part—but by no means entirely—on shore, which stands to the credit of the Naval Brigade.

In the first years of Federal control over the naval forces there existed a body known as the Royal Australian Naval Reserves, enlisted and maintained on lines as nearly as possible parallel to those laid down for the Imperial Royal Naval Reserve. The introduction of compulsory training completely altered the character of this force, which henceforth included—and eventually became almost entirely composed of—those young Australians who preferred naval to military training. For under the Defence Act the navy has the first pick of each year's trainees. Theoretically, a naval officer, attending at a muster of recruit trainees called for that purpose, selects for the navy as many of them as may be required. In practice such compulsion as is used is of a negative kind; cadets volunteer for the naval side so freely that many have to be rejected, and selection depends mainly on (*a*) the boy's intended occupation, (*b*) the distance of his home from the naval drill-room. At the outset of this training scheme the new arrivals were known as "R.A.N.R. (O)," the older members of the force being "R.A.N.R. (M)"; recruiting for the latter section ceased very soon, but its existing personnel provided a sound nucleus for the recruits. As soon as the (M) section had sufficiently diminished, it was absorbed into the (O) section, and the whole force was rechristened "The Royal Australian Naval Brigade."

This brigade at the outbreak of war numbered 1,646 officers and men, besides 3,092 cadets in training. The war-work of the brigade does not, except in a few operations of

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an abnormal character, lend itself to continuous narrative. It consisted—as most naval work consisted, but to a much greater extent—in taking precautions against all sorts of unknown but suspected dangers; in maintaining watches and guards and patrols, which were hardly ever challenged and seemed to the layman chiefly a mass of irritating routine, but irrefutably proved their necessity by being so rarely found necessary. The Brigade was the police-force of the Australian coast, just as the destroyers were the police-force of the Malay Archipelago, and the destroyer-crews at least had a change of surroundings. Before considering any of its work in detail, it may be best to set down its various duties in bulk; and it will be well to remember that those who carried out these duties were for the most part boys under age, the first-fruits of compulsory training.

The work of the R.A.N. Brigade, then, comprised—

Examination Services at all defended ports in Australia;

The manning and maintenance of Port War Signal Stations and other War Signal Stations and Look-out Stations;

The manning of auxiliary craft used for Coastal Patrols, and of the motor launches used for Harbour Patrols and Dock Defences;

Detention of enemy vessels;

Providing (towards the end of the war) guards for wireless stations, wharves, and ships in port;

Certain naval intelligence services, including issue of permits to aliens employed on or near the water, investigation of reports concerning enemy activities, and a good deal of local censorship;

Mine-sweeping;

A good deal of naval transport work.

Furthermore, the brigade provided, almost entirely from its own personnel,

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A naval contingent for service in German New Guinea;[1]

A naval bridging train, intended for service in Flanders, but diverted to Gallipoli and Egypt;

A contingent of 300 men for service with the A.I.F.; and furnished gunlayers and signallers for merchant-vessels, telegraphists for the wireless service, and more than 200 officers and ratings for service in the seagoing navy. And side by side with all this war-work the brigade's ordinary routine of recruiting for the R.A.N. and training the annual contingent of cadets went on uninterruptedly.

II

War precautions ashore, being entirely of a defensive nature, need not await a formal declaration of war. On the 2nd of August, 1914, the Director of Naval Reserves (for the Brigade had not yet been rechristened) was ordered to take immediate steps for putting in force the Examination Service at all "Defended Ports." This meant that at Thursday Island, Brisbane, Newcastle, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Fremantle, and Hobart every vessel entering the port must, unless specially exempted, anchor in an area set apart for the purpose and submit to examination by the naval authorities through an officer of the brigade. For this service the coastal pilots of Australia were, at the outbreak of war, mobilised and given rank as lieutenants in the R.A.N.R. The object of the scrutiny was to prevent the entrance of enemy vessels under any disguise into harbours otherwise defended against enemy attack. Because during war, and especially at its outbreak, every vessel must be suspected until everything is known about her, no exemptions from the actual examination were permitted. Occasionally during the years of war some coastal shipmaster, assuming that his vessel was so well known as to need no examination, would disregard the "stop" signal and attempt to enter unexamined. Such action ignored the possibility that even the best known coaster might, for example, have been seized outside by some German

[1] The special achievements of this contingent are recorded in *ch. iii.*

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raiding captain and sent into the harbour with an enemy crew. The skipper would therefore be brought to by a shot across his bows from the "examination batteries"—the sequel being a reprimand, and a demand to refund to the authorities the cost of the shot necessitated by his defiance of regulations. Well-known vessels, however, whose masters were in peace-time allowed to be their own pilots, retained that privilege when once they had been passed by the examining officer.

Before the evening of the 3rd of August all ports except Brisbane had this service in working order, and Brisbane was not long behind. The actual declaration of war touched other springs; just after noon on the 5th enemy ships were being held up all round the coast,[2] measures were taken for the defence of dock-gates (which an enterprising alien resident might try to blow up), and even Australian warships were compelled to follow a prescribed method of approaching and entering Australian ports. In this connection observation-stations (technically known as "Port War Signal Stations") were established at the entrances of the defended ports, and also at Albany; and naval brigade officers in local control were instructed to take on intelligence duty. The details of the work done at these signal stations, like most of the details concerning R.A.N. Brigade work, cannot be published even where they would be of interest, since they conformed to the general practice laid down by the Admiralty in confidential orders for the whole Empire; but the lay reader will not lose much by this reticence, though it prevents justice from being done to the strenuous and consistently laborious work of the brigade.

The Port War Signal Stations were manned and operated almost continuously[3] up to the end of the war, and were, indeed, not closed till the 2nd of December, 1918. They were occasionally supplemented, for periods ranging from three months to two years in different cases, by naval lookout stations more particularly devoted to the acquisition of knowledge as to the movements of shipping along the Australian coast; these were established when necessary near Townsville,

[2] For the capture of the *Pfalz*, see *p. 45 and Appendix No. 11.*

[3] Temporarily, and at a few ports only, these stations were replaced by naval lookout stations.

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Brisbane, Hobart, Port Adelaide, and Albany, and on Cape Howe, Wilson's Promontory, King Island, and Cape Otway. The Examination Services, however, were modified, discontinued, or re-established according to the needs of the moment; for at the best they were a hindrance to traffic, and the acceleration of traffic—especially of local traffic—was of such value in war-time that only a real necessity for extreme precaution justified any such hindrance. Port Jackson, therefore, which was the Commonwealth's most vital spot from the maritime point of view, was safeguarded by a service continuously maintained up to the end of the war; but in Port Phillip, which was less tempting and less open to the entry of a disguised enemy raider, the service adapted itself to temporary situations as they arose. When in April, 1915, it seemed unlikely that any German vessel was in a position to approach the Australian coast, the restrictions were considerably relaxed. In July they were abolished. The fear of a raider's proximity in February, 1916, revived the full rigour of the service; but in April of that year it was again modified, and not even the much post-dated news of the *Wolf's* venture was considered sufficient reason for further stringency. At Brisbane and Newcastle similar (though not identical) alterations occurred, the service being altogether discontinued in April, 1915, re-established in the following February, discontinued again in April, and revived in a modified form towards the end of the year.

To relieve the monotony of bald chronological narrative, it may be interesting to note the process by which one of these alterations—that of April, 1915—was effected. In March of that year the Naval Board,

> in consequence of the altered conditions prevailing in the Pacific, owing to the destruction of *Dresden* and the arrival of *Prinz Eitel Friedrich* at Norfolk, Virginia,

suggested the discontinuance of the service at all ports except Port Jackson, Port Phillip, and Fremantle, and its modification at the two latter ports. On the 2nd of April, the Defence Department and the Minister having in the meantime concurred, the Admiralty gave its assent, and during the month

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the suggested alterations were effected, arrangements being made in every case to facilitate revival of the full service at twenty-fours hours' notice. As a matter of fact, when in February, 1916, it was decided to revive the service at all ports, Newcastle recorded 5 hours, and Melbourne and Thursday Island 5½ hours for complete restoration. The Admiralty, as a later series of messages showed, considered 6 hours the maximum allowance; but, in a country where neither men nor vessels of the special type required are obtainable in large numbers or at a moment's notice, few ports were able to reach this standard.

To the Examination Service the brigade allotted 8 officers and 225 men, and in it employed 43 small steamers—mostly the pilot steamers attached to the several ports—and 19 motor-launches. This was the least monotonous branch of the work, especially in the early days of the war, when a number of enemy vessels came into port without being aware that war had been declared. One of them, the s.s. *Hobart,* arriving off Port Phillip Heads before day-break, and observing the searchlights, hesitated to enter. The armed boarding-party had, however, been disguised as civilians, and the District Naval Officer, Captain Richardson,[4] who with the examining officer and another accompanied them, succeeded in "bluffing" the Germans into the belief that they were quarantine officials. The ship, when safely under the land-batteries, was captured. It was guessed that the German captain, having been thus trapped, had not thrown overboard his secret codes and instructions. Accordingly, Richardson, while placing the rest of the officers and crew under guard, allowed the captain more freedom than usual, in the hope that, thinking himself unwatched, he would attempt to destroy the secret documents and would thus disclose their hiding-place. As had been anticipated, in the early hours of the morning the German captain crept from his bunk, and, entering an inner cabin, slid back a panel behind which lay the papers. Captain Richardson instantly covered him with a revolver and secured them. Amongst them was the code subsequently translated by Dr. Wheatley. Though such incidents did not occur after

[4] Capt. J. T. Richardson; R.A.N. District Naval Officer, Victoria, 1911/19; of Melbourne; b. London, 3 Oct., 1860.

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the early days of the struggle, the Examination Service provided other excitements. Although the pilots, who must in all weathers go out and board incoming vessels, were inured to the work, the young trainees of the naval brigade were not. "For those serving aboard the examination steamer" (wrote an officer afterwards) "on a black night, with a howling gale, and with the little vessel rolling gunwales under a vicious cross sea, life was not altogether joyful. . . . . Yet despite discomforts and, at times, the danger incidental to the job, service aboard the steamer was always popular amongst the young signalmen of the R.A.N.R., the majority of whom had never been afloat before."

The other harbour duties—patrols, dock defences, etc.—need not be described in any detail. They were practically continuous throughout the war; in the case of docks, they included the laying and the care of booms and nets as well as the provision of sentries and boat-patrols. But the complexity of these harbour duties may be illustrated by enumerating them as they affected the naval brigade at Sydney; there they included, at one time or another,

Examination Services.
Port War Signal Station.
Guards at Cockatoo Island, Spectacle Island, Garden Island, Gore Bay oil-tanks, Mort's dock, Pennant Hills wireless station, Woolwich dock, Admiralty House, Hawkesbury bridge, and on interned enemy vessels.
Harbour patrols.

About 500 men were mobilised for this work. The total number employed on similar duties throughout the Commonwealth were:

On	Port War Signal Stations	144
	Lookout Stations	55
	Harbour patrols	52
	Dock defences	115
	Detention of enemy vessels	156
	Guarding of wireless stations ..	150
	Total ..	672

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so that, including the Examination Services, more than 900 officers and men of the naval brigade were occupied with purely local defence—work which at first sight may seem easy and safe, and especially desirable because it did not involve separation from families and home, but which was at the same time incessant, tedious, and almost unrewarded by obvious success or the excitement of combat, and was carried out either by men unfit for active war or trainees too young for oversea service.

III

The sinking of the *Cumberland* in July, 1917, imposed on the naval brigade two new and extremely important duties. As we have already seen, it was for some time doubtful whether she had been sunk by the explosion of a bomb placed among her cargo or by collision with a mine, and precautions were taken against the recurrence of either danger. As the "internal explosion" theory first held the field, it was against the surreptitious introduction of bombs among cargo that the first precautions were taken.

A Cabinet meeting, intent on providing adequate protection for oversea shipping in Australian ports, decided that the naval authorities should take over the duty of providing guards for all wharves and shipping, especially oversea shipping. The military authorities, who apparently had been attending to this duty to such extent as previously seemed necessary, were asked to supply the bulk of the guards required; but full control was now vested in the navy. Naturally there was at first some confusion. Military aid was essential, since the naval brigade existed only at the chief ports, and at several of these was not in full strength; and it was agreed that enclosed wharves should be guarded by naval detachments, while open wharves and shipping alongside piers were left to military guards under naval orders. But before the end of the year the division of responsibility grew irksome; in December the Commandant

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of the 3rd Military District (*i.e.*, the State of Victoria) reported that he had insufficient personnel available to supply the guards required in Melbourne, and in February the Commandant of the 1st Military District (*i.e.*, Queensland), being asked to supply a guard for the port of Bowen, suggested that the navy might enlist some men on its own account.

To understand what this meant, it may be stated that in Melbourne alone during December the average number of ships under guard each day was twelve. There were never fewer than eight; occasionally twenty-four came under guard at one time. Not all the ships in port were guarded. Coastal[5] colliers and small passenger steamers very rarely obtained protection; large coastal passenger and cargo vessels got it occasionally; for the most part it was reserved for (*a*) troopships and storeships, (*b*) oversea merchant vessels. To protect troopships a guard of 24 men[6] was employed; oversea vessels had 20, large coastal vessels 16, and others 9—when they were guarded at all. The usual contingent of guards numbered 110 from the brigade and between 360 and 370 from the military forces. This seems a considerable expenditure of force; but there were no alternatives—patrolling with motor-boats would have used up more men, the enclosure of wharves (except in the case of the New Pier at Port Melbourne) was found impracticable, and the use of guard-parties actually on board the vessels was the only safe method. The brigade, mainly occupied with other duties, could not spare another man. It therefore became necessary to enlist an entirely new body (known as the "R.A.N.B. Naval Guard Section") for the special duty of guarding wharves and shipping. Members of this body must have seen service in some naval or military force within the Empire, and preference was given to returned sailors or soldiers of the

[5] This term is used in its general sense. In Australia a "coastal" steamer is (generally) one plying along the coast of a single state; those which visit more than one state are called "interstate" vessels.

[6] Of course the whole 24 were not on duty together. The number allotted provided for three "watches"; that is to say, in a troopship 8 men were on guard at a time, in oversea merchant vessels 6 or 7, and so on.

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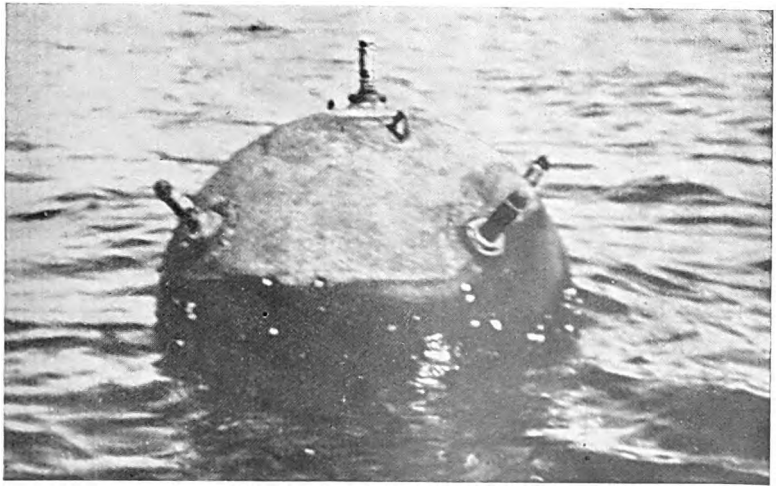
AN OFFICER OF THE EXAMINATION SERVICE ON HIS WAY TO INSPECT A VESSEL IN THE BRISBANE RIVER

Lent by Lieut.-Commr. O. W. Gillam, R.A.N.R.



THE GERMAN MINE WASHED UP NEAR FALMOUTH, TASMANIA, 21 FEBRUARY 1918

Aust. War Memorial Collection No. A2214.

To face p. 384.

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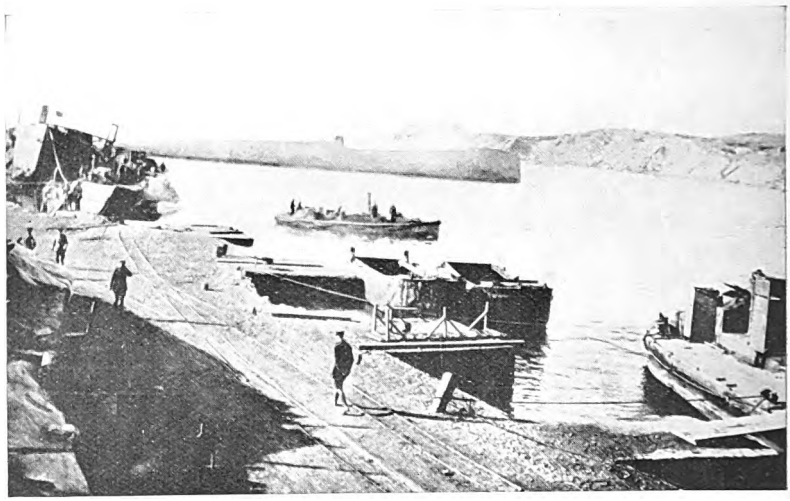
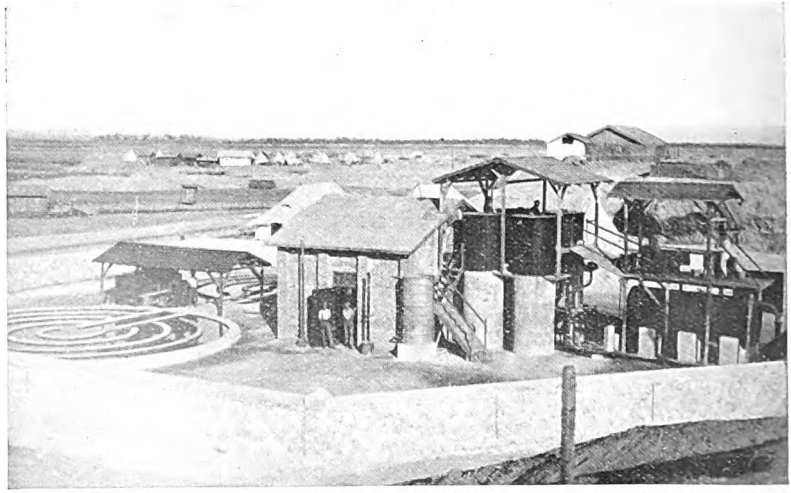


THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVAL BRIDGING TRAIN AT SUVLA BAY, 1915

A stone breakwater in course of construction by the Bridging Train at West Beach.

Lent by Capt. L. S. Bracegirdle, R.A.N.
Aust. War Memorial Collection No. A1247.



THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVAL BRIDGING TRAIN ON THE SUEZ CANAL, 1916

Kubri West, showing the filter beds and pumping plant erected by the Train.

Lent by Capt. L. S. Bracegirdle, R.A.N.
Aust. War Memorial Collection No. A1272.

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Commonwealth. Recruiting began on the 22nd of February, 1918, within the age-limit of 20-50, though chief petty officers of the navy and military officers of corresponding standing were enlisted up to 55. The provisional establishment was laid down as follows:—

	Commissioned Officers.	Warrant Officers.	Petty Officers.	Leading Ratings.	Able Seamen.
Queensland—					
Thursday Island ..	—	—	1	—	4
Cairns	—	—	3	2	10
Townsville ..	—	—	5	4	13
Rockhampton District	—	—	4	3	15
Brisbane	4	—	24	20	196
New South Wales—					
Sydney	10	3	52	30	306
Newcastle	2	—	10	4	42
Victoria—					
Melbourne	6	3	42	26	363
Williamstown ..	3	1	6	6	85
Geelong	2	—	6	—	60
South Australia—					
Port Adelaide and Outer Harbour ..	3	2	22	13	88
Port Pirie	1	—	2	2	14
Western Australia—					
Albany	1	—	3	—	15
Fremantle	5	—	11	6	118
Tasmania—					
Hobart	2	1	6	—	18
Launceston	—	—	2	—	9
	39	10	199	116	1,356

In Tasmania, however, where military guards were plentiful and naval reservists few, the system was left in abeyance; and from this and other minor causes the actual number of naval guards employed was only 26 officers and 1,407 men. The guard was enlisted for the period of the war, its disbandment being fixed to coincide with the rescission of the

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proclamation that had called out the Citizen Forces. But when this rescission became imminent in September, 1919, it was decided to extend the guard's term "until all expeditionary forces serving outside Australia have been substantially demobilized," so that it was the last home-service corps to perform war duties.

The second product of the *Cumberland* disaster—the Mine-Sweeping Section of the Naval Brigade—was established on the 17th of July, 1917, within ten days of the disaster. This was an excellent instance of the foresight with which the Board provided against all possibilities, for at the moment it was thought by everyone that the explosion had been internal. At Sydney five vessels were manned—three trawlers belonging to the Government of New South Wales and two steam-tugs; a third tug was afterwards added. Several of the steamers belonging to the North Coast Steam Navigation Company would have been more suited to the work, but it was decided to avoid any interference with coastal traffic. At Melbourne one seagoing tug and four hopper barges were employed, and at Fremantle four barges and two tugs. The scheme included the use of two sweepers off Brisbane and two off Townsville, but suitable vessels could not be obtained before the war ended. The work done by this section in war-time comprised the sweeping up of the *Wolf's* Gabo Island mine-field, and the sweeping of a half-mile channel from Port Phillip heads to a position ten miles beyond Wilson's Promontory. At Fremantle also a channel was swept for almost twenty-eight miles from the North Mole—that is, to the edge of the 110-fathom contour—but could not be then buoyed; and from Port Jackson heads a similar channel, to the 110-fathom line, was arranged for but was not swept till the war was over.

One more of the naval brigade's many sections deserves special notice. The wireless stations of the Commonwealth were at the beginning of the war put in charge of the military for protection (as will be seen later, their operation became

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a purely naval affair). But towards the end of 1916 the Board decided to take over full control of the principal stations — those at Townsville, Rockhampton, Brisbane, Sydney, and Adelaide. This step was a natural one, inasmuch as the necessity for a regular system of precautions was likely to be less obvious to the military than to the naval authorities. In South Australia, indeed, the military commandant—to whom the responsibility had been left—had abolished guards altogether after the first few months of the war, employing only a night watchman between midnight and 6 a.m. In February, 1917, the new régime was adopted at the stations just mentioned—a petty officer and four men being on duty night and day, with provision to increase this number in time of danger to 1 petty officer, 1 leading seaman, and 12 men. The arrangement worked so well that in April it was decided to bring the guarding of the stations at Thursday Island, Cooktown, Melbourne, Hobart, and Perth under similar control, leaving a few distant stations *in statu quo;* thus Darwin was to be left to the military, Port Moresby to the care of the local European constabulary, and the out-stations of Western Australia—Esperance on the Bight, Geraldton, Roebourne, Broome, and Wyndham—to night watchmen only. Even this decision was afterwards altered, so that in the end only the Melbourne and Hobart stations were taken over, Melbourne on the 18th of May and Hobart (where the lack of R.A.N. Brigade ratings necessitated the employment of returned discharged sailors and soldiers attached temporarily to the brigade) on the 7th of June. Of the work done by this branch of the brigade there is no more to say than that, like the rest of the navy's police-work, it was efficiently and undisturbedly performed.

The brigade at its moment of greatest expansion numbered 2,817 adults (besides 3,834 cadets); in all 90 officers and 2,909 men passed through its ranks during the war. As many of these were at different times used for different services (a man being engaged, say, for six

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months in mine-sweeping, and three years in examination services), the enrolment by services shows a larger muster still:—

Service.	Officers.	Ratings.	Total.
Examination services (exclusive of the coastal pilots[7])	8	225	233
Port war signal stations	9	135	144
Naval lookout stations	—	55	55
Mine-sweeping	22	96	118
Harbour patrols	2	50	52
Dock defences	3	112	115
Wharf and ship guards	26	1,407	1,433
Detention of enemy vessels	6	150	156
Guards at wireless stations	—	150	150
Total on home service	76	2,380	2,456
New Guinea Expeditionary Force ..	14	489	503
Naval Bridging Train	17	586	603
Naval Reinforcements battalion, A.I.F. ..	3	300	303
Transport duties	1	50	51
Lent to R.A.N.	16	200	216
Telegraphist ratings lent to R.A.N. radio service	—	60	60
Guns' crews for merchant vessels ..	—	50	50
Signalmen for merchant vessels ..	—	40	40
Total on oversea services ..	51	1,775	1,826
Grand total	127	4,155	4,282

For their work the various sections of the Brigade used at Thursday Island 8 motor-boats (including the harbour master's launch and the quarantine launch); at Brisbane the *Gayundah,* 3 auxiliaries, and 1 motor-boat; at Newcastle the steam-tug *Ajax;* at Sydney 10 auxiliaries (including the pilot-yacht *Captain Cook*) and 5 motor-boats; at Melbourne 12 auxiliaries and 5 motor-boats; at Adelaide 5 auxiliaries, at Fremantle 9 (including the *Gannet,* which was originally the *Penguin*), and at Hobart 3.[7]

[7] About 80 pilots were also employed as examining officers.

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On the 8th of November, 1918, peace seemed so near that the Board made preparations to terminate the Brigade's war services. On the 12th the Examination Service was modified by ceasing to board incoming merchant vessels unless there was definite reason for suspicion; on the 21st the service was totally discontinued, the lookout stations were paid off (except that on King Island), and the mine-sweeping section was put on a peace footing. With the gradual disbandment of the naval guards, the Brigade's war work came to an end.

IV

The account of the war services of the Naval Brigade would be incomplete without reference to a little-known and unique series of operations carried out oversea by the Royal Australian Naval Bridging Train, a body mainly composed of Australian Naval Reserve officers and men.

By the beginning of 1915 it was clear that, apart from the shore services already described, there would for some time be little employment for the Australian Naval Reserves. At the same time information received from England disclosed the great need of engineer units on the Western Front, where the "trench war" had begun to take shape; and hints had been given that a naval unit would be acceptable, since it would work in connection with the Royal Naval Division in Flanders and should be qualified for technical operations of the kind contemplated. Consequently on the 8th of February, 1915, the Naval Board forwarded to the Minister for Defence, who then controlled naval affairs also, the following minute:—

> The Naval Board, having consulted the Chief of the General Staff as to most suitable method by which services of R.A.N.R. officers and men can be made use of in the present war, propose that an offer be made to the Home Government to supply two Bridging Trains, completed to war establishment, the same to be manned by naval ratings drawn mainly from ranks of R.A.N.R. . . . It is proposed that, while retaining naval ranks and ratings in all other respects, the men comprising these trains should be paid, organised, equipped, and trained under military supervision.

On the 12th the Commonwealth Government offered by cable one Bridging Train in accordance with Imperial War Establishments, including personnel and their equipment, vehicles, and horses. Personnel will be Royal Australian Naval Reserve and trained in bridging.

On the 18th the Imperial War Council accepted this offer.

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Looking about for suitable officers, the Board decided to appoint two who had done good service already with the New Guinea expedition—Lieutenant Bracegirdle,[8] and Lieutenant Bond whose daring at the taking of the wireless station has been already[9] noted. These officers, Bracegirdle being in command, took up their appointments on the 24th, and the work of enlisting and training the new force began forthwith. By the 12th of March 115 men were encamped in the Domain at Melbourne, and the difficulties showed themselves. No one, either in the naval or in the military service, knew anything practical about bridging trains; the pontoons and vehicles to be used had first to be built, and none were available for training until the middle of May; and practically the whole personnel had to be taught from the beginning how to ride and how to handle horses, with a very few rough remounts to practise on.

On the 3rd of June, however, the unit embarked in the transport *Port Macquarie*. It consisted of 7 officers, 278 petty officers and men, 26 "first reinforcements," and 412 horses, with fifty 6-horse pontoon and trestle waggons and eight other vehicles. The training in pontoon construction, which had been impossible hitherto, was to be given at Chatham on arrival in England. The voyage was not fortunate, as the ship ran into tropical conditions too soon for horses closely stalled and newly come from a Melbourne winter; by the end of June, when they were landed at Bombay, 79 had died, mostly of pneumonia or exhaustion through over-heating. It had been intended to proceed direct from Australia to Aden, but near Socotra orders were received to return to Colombo, and from thence the ship was sent to Bombay to discharge all horses. It was just as well; the mortality among horses in the Red Sea ("temperature 93°, water 90°," says the log on the 13th of July) would have been very heavy.

At Port Said the Train was suddenly diverted from its original purpose. On the 17th of July—the day of arrival

[8] Capt. L. S. Bracegirdle, D.S.O.; R.A.N. Commanded R.A.N.B.T., 1915/17; of Sydney; b. Balmain, N.S.W., 31 May, 1881.

[9] *See p. 90.*

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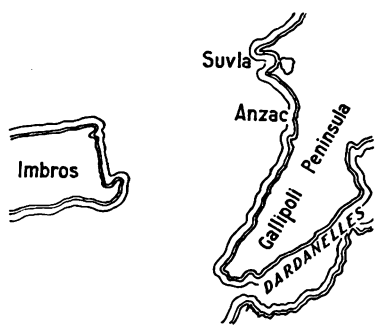
—orders were issued that obviously contemplated a voyage to England; on the 18th new orders sent the Train to the Dardanelles; at Imbros on the 25th it was announced that the unit had been handed over by the Admiralty (which until then had controlled it) for service with the British Army and had been attached to the IX Army Corps, which was at the moment busily preparing under General Stopford for the landing at Suvla Bay on the 7th of August. Thus a body of men whose previous training had been either purely naval or specially concerned with horse management were suddenly flung into work mainly concerned with the one service — pontoon construction and management —in which they had received no training at all. Probably nothing but what the officer commanding described as "a general feeling of refusal to be associated with failure," so characteristic of the real Australian, enabled the Train to carry on without serious mistakes or obvious inefficiency.



On the 27th began the process of discharging equipment on shore. The *Port Macquarie* was anchored far out from land, and neither tugs nor lighters were available; consequently all stores, baggage, and superstructure had to be embodied in rafts on deck, slung over the side, and towed ashore with pontoons manned by members of the Train. Luckily it was decided not to land the waggons. The original intention of the British authorities was to have the pontoons, etc., made up into raft formation and towed across to Suvla Bay at the proper time by picket-boats; in a choppy sea, such as is occasionally met with in the northern Ægean, this would have meant their immediate destruction, and the Train was in the end allowed to use a small transport, the *Itria,* into which everything must be reloaded.

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The Train's log about this time is worth quoting from:—

27th July	.. . . . Started discharging. . . .
28th July	.. Continued discharging. . . .
29th July	.. Completed discharging. . . . Pitched camp.
30th July	.. Instruction in building pontoon rafts. . . .
31st July	.. Instruction in pontoon piers and rafts. . . .
1st August	.. Instruction, and building rafts in darkness for night attack.
2nd August	.. Instruction in building pontoon piers, &c. Instruction carried on during night. . . .
3rd August	.. Instruction in pontoon pier building. . . .
4th August	.. Started loading pontoons and superstructure in s.s. *Itria*. . . .
5th August	.. Loading pontoons and bridging material all day. . . . All pontoons had to be pulled off by our own men.
6th August	.. Loading remainder of pontoons and gear. . . . . All hands aboard by 8 p.m. Men working until midnight stowing gear. Destroyers and lighters filled with troops leave harbour at dusk.

And so, after five days' and nights' instruction in the use of pontoons—which was henceforth to be their principal work—and six other days' hard work unloading and loading up again, the Train was flung into the muddle of the Suvla Bay attack.

The orders received by the O.C. were to land as early as possible, reconnoitre the beach, and select suitable spots[10] both for immediate landing and for permanent piers to be erected later. The *Itria* reached its anchorage at 5 a.m. At 11.30, his reconnaissance complete, Bracegirdle in pursuance of orders tried to confer with the Chief Engineer of the IX Corps. Repeated wireless messages failed to ascertain his whereabouts; but just after 5 p.m. written orders came from the A.Q.M.G. to send ashore a party to erect a barrel pier at "A" landing, the barrels having been landed from some other vessel, but no working party with them. This was the only work done by the Train on that day, simply because no other orders could be obtained; but the rest was welcome to men

[10] Of course this was not the only or the first reconnaissance for that purpose. Landing was actually in progress when the *Itria* reached Suvla.

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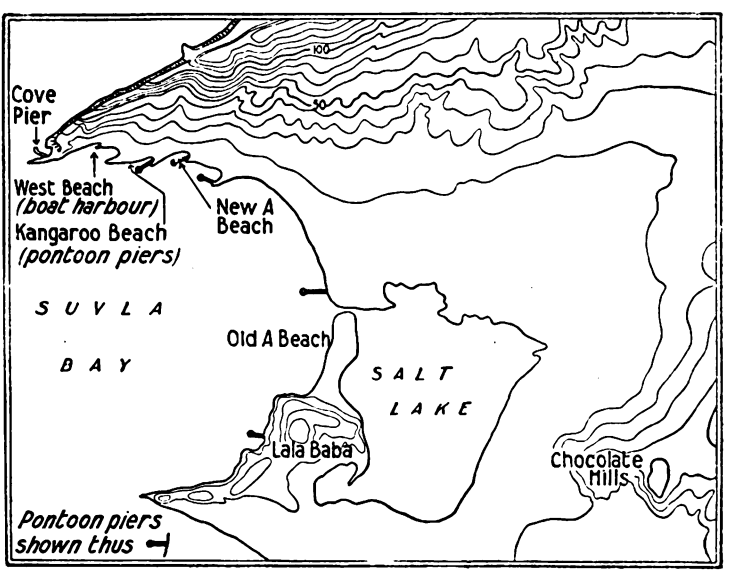
who had been at work for forty-eight hours. Nor was it a very tranquil rest, since enemy shrapnel was continually reaching the upper decks of the *Itria,* and a Taube did its best to land bombs there also, so that in the evening anchorage had to be shifted.

Next day at noon disembarkation really began. The pontoons were brought ashore, and a landing-pier was constructed at top speed, in spite of the possible presence of enemy land-mines. Work went on all night, and disembarkation was complete by 2 p.m. on the 9th. During that day news came from "Old A" beach that the lifeboats engaged in taking off the wounded there could not get within 100 yards of the shore; could the Australians put up as soon as possible a pier from which embarkation could proceed? At once the necessary pontoons and superstructure were prepared and rowed two miles to "A" beach under continual shrapnel fire; a pier 120 yards long was constructed in twenty minutes from the time of arrival, and was in full use five minutes later.



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From that time the Train had its hands full. Two days of further pier-construction, landing troops, landing artillery stores, and shifting camp to "Kangaroo" beach were followed by an altogether new task—the supplying of water to the army ashore. It is notorious that at and after the landing the water-supply was chaotically managed. Every drop of water had to be brought ashore from lighters, a good deal in small petrol-tins. "It was a common sight," wrote the O.C., to see thousands of thirsty troops congregated on the beach with the thermometer well up in the nineties, waiting to pounce on any available water-supply. This naturally gave the enemy guns the targets they desired, and it was heart-rending to see the unnecessary number of casualties incurred thereby.

On the 12th, however, it was decided that the R.A.N.B.T. should become responsible for the whole supply from ship's side to shore, and thence to storage tanks and distributing centres. This work was in addition to, not in lieu of, the Train's regular occupations of pier-building and stores-landing. No proper material was to hand, but three fire-engines and some canvas fire-hose were obtained from warships. Then a trestle was run out into nine feet of water, with a pontoon at the end of it carrying two fire-engines; the fire-hose was laid along the trestles to shore, where it communicated with a line of canvas water-troughs laid in shallow trenches. Surplus pontoons were dug into the ground, to be used as temporary storage tanks. Lighters brought alongside the moored pontoon were thus able to discharge directly into the tanks. This system remained in use for many months. Oil engines were tried for pumping, instead of the usual manhandled ship's fire-engines, but they broke down repeatedly. The canvas hose—which soldiers were continually puncturing to get a squirt of water to fill their bottles—were at first guarded by sentries; afterwards a line of 3-inch iron pipe was substituted, and regular iron tanks replaced the pontoons, being perched high enough to distribute water along the beach camps by gravitation.[11]

On the 20th of August it was explained confidentially to the O.C. that next day certain enemy positions would be heavily attacked, and that engineers were badly needed to help in

[11] An enemy high-velocity gun made a direct hit on this pipe-line. The tanks were frequently damaged by shell-fire.

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entrenching on the ground expected to be won; would the Train lend the army, say, 34 men for this business? The Train did so, with Lieutenant Bond in charge; but the attack (that of the 21st) was unfortunately a total failure, and the engineers were not called in.

About this time the Train found itself in a very amphibious position, so to speak. Previously attached to the 11th Division of the IX Army Corps, it was now made part of the Corps Troops; but in addition it was ordered for the future "to carry out any work afloat, or on the beach up to high-water mark, that the Navy might require." In consequence, to quote the O.C. again:—

> The principal duties allotted to the unit by the Royal Navy were as follows:—Water supply, care of landing-piers, discharging of stores from store-ships and transports, lighterage of same to the shore, salving of lighters and steamboats wrecked during gales, assisting in salving of T.B.D. *Louis*, disembarking of troops with their baggage on all beaches, and of munitions and stores. . . .
>
> The duties allotted to the unit by the G.O.C. the IX Army Corps were briefly as follows:—Control and issue of all engineer and trench stores and materials, care and issue of trench bombs and demolition stores (for some weeks after landing, and until proper ordnance dumps were established), erection of high-explosive magazines, dug-outs, cookhouses, and galleys, assembly of hospital huttings, construction of iron frames for front-line wire entanglements; and the manning and control of the steam-tug *Daphne*.[12]

Besides all this, the unit supplied many wireless operators for the advanced field wireless stations, and several draughtsmen for the Army Corps work; the O.C. also acted as beach-master at Kangaroo Beach until the Evacuation in December.

Quite early in the Suvla days danger became monotonous. The log for many days alternates between "Enemy aircraft dropped bombs" and "Base heavily shelled with high explosives" or "Base shelled as usual." On the 30th of September "Enemy have not bombarded base for two days," but they made up for it on the 1st of October. The mortality, it is true, was low, casualties being a little over 10 per cent., but the unit was powerless to retaliate; its duties did not involve any form of active fighting, and it had merely to carry on and be shot at or bombed—no easy method of living. During the rough weather, which prevailed from the beginning

[12] Photographs of several works carried out by the Train are given in *Vol. XII—plates 130-3 and 150.*

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of October onwards, it was often necessary to requisition from the British troops fatigue parties of two or three hundred men to assist in landing troops or stores;[13] and the requisitioned men openly looked forward to trench-life and its comparative shelter again as a rest from the heavy work under shell-fire on the beach.

The weather was probably even more exhausting than the Turkish fire. In October "Southerly gale—two horse-boats piled on rocks" and "Heavy swell running. Water services interfered with" are typical log entries. The details of some of the Train's work in these conditions—notably the construction of crib piers without proper material, and the salving of a large iron motor-lighter—are given in an appendix.[14] From the 28th of September, too, the "Sick Report" becomes a daily item of the log. At that time the average sick-list numbered 35; a month later it rose to 45. but then slowly decreased to the twenties. Apart from wounds, the chief ailments were jaundice, paratyphoid, pneumonia, and blood-poisoning (since flies quickly infected every slight scratch or abrasion). But the Train came well through it all. And, simply because the quality of its work is so little known, and so emphatically deserves knowing, three descriptions of it are here quoted from authorities who carry weight:—

> There they are to-day, in charge of the landing of a great part of the stores of a British army. They are quite cut off from their own force; they scarcely come into the category of the Australian Force, and scarcely into that of the British; they are scarcely army and scarcely navy. Who it is that looks after their special interests, and which is the authority that has the power of recognising any good work that they have done, I do not know. If you want to see the work, you have only to go to Kangaroo Beach, Suvla Bay, and look about you. They have made a harbour.
>
> (C. E. W. BEAN, Official War Correspondent, A.I.F.; 11/10/15.)

> The ability of the unit to overcome the difficulties of the lack of adequate material which necessitated improvising to a large extent, was due to the fact that the majority of the personnel were adult naval trainees. These men in most instances had excellent training as apprentices to various trades in civil life; and, by reason of their years of training, both as senior naval cadets and as adult naval trainees, took pride in the fact that they were the only Australian naval unit serving in a European theatre of war. They were there-

[13] At these times it was a common sight to see a petty officer and a couple of ratings from the Train in charge of 30 or 40 British soldiers.

[14] *See Appendix No. 20.*

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fore bent on proving, both to the Royal Navy and to the British Army, that they could overcome any difficulties. . . . The workmanship of the skilled tradesmen in the unit was of the highest quality; this fact has been admitted by senior officers of the technical branches in both arms of the service, who were in every way competent to judge.

(Commander BRACEGIRDLE, O.C. the Train.)

From the time the 1st R.A.N.B.T. joined the IX Corps all ranks have worked hard, cheerfully, and well. They have rendered most valuable services in connection with the construction and maintenance of landing-piers, beach water-supply, and the landing, charge of, and distribution of engineer material at Suvla, and have most willingly given their help in many other directions. Their work has been continuously heavy, and they have done it well.

(General BLAND,[15] R.E., Chief Engineer, IX Army Corps.)

The Australian Navy, it would seem, had its share of Gallipoli honour.

Then came the Evacuation. It was preluded with "driving rain and snow all day; troops suffering from exposure; carpenters erecting bunks in every available space in the dug-outs for the accommodation of frost-bitten men";[16] and two days later "seventy men suffering from exposure and frost-bite were accommodated in dugout for the night." The Train was hard at work erecting pier structures and making new landing—or rather embarking—stages. On the 10th and 11th of December it had a variegated programme:—

10/11. Finished road ramp to pier;[17] erecting hutting; carpenters completed landing stages, which were towed to West Cove. Davits and all loose iron thrown off pier. . . .

11/12. Erecting hutting; clearing up Royal Engineers' park, landed cement ex *Spinnell*, and stacked R.E. stores for shipment. Packs ready for instant removal of unit. . . .

On the 12th they were erecting huts in one place, and dismantling huts for shipment at another. Then began the period of work "all day and all night"; and the sick-list went down from the twenties to 7 and 8. On the 16th

Erecting hutting; completed pier at Suvla Cove. 153 men and 3 officers in charge of Sub-Lieutenant R. L. Buller evacuated in *Abbassieh;*

and next day

[15] Brig.-Gen. E. H. Bland, C.B., C.M.G.; R.E. Of White Abbey, Co. Antrim, Ireland; b. Fareham, Hants., Eng., 3 May, 1866.

[16] Log entry for November 27.

[17] *Vol. XII, plate 150.*

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C.O., Lieutenant Bond, Chief W.O. Shepherd,[18] and 60 other ranks still at Suvla. Pontoons, buoys, iron, and all other stores destroyed. Enemy shelled base heavily after sunset. Left Kangaroo Beach 7.30 p.m. in our lifeboats; boarded H.M.T. *El Kahira*. . . . Left Suvla 2 a.m. on 18th.[19]

On the 19th the sick-list was up to 19, and the O.C. was in hospital at Mudros with malaria and jaundice.

For its work in connection with the Evacuation the Train received special commendation. General Bland, enumerating the engineer forces engaged in this work, each of which "during the last fortnight . . . was working in shifts throughout the twenty-four hours daily," singled out for particular praise two units, one of which was the Train:—

Both these units set a fine example of endurance, good organisation, and discipline. Their commanders were indefatigable in anticipating requirements, and assisting whenever and wherever required. I bring them to your notice as two specially valuable and well-commanded units, which can be relied on to do their best under difficult conditions.

The Train now entered upon an entirely new phase of operations. Leaving Mudros on the 17th of January in charge of Lieutenant Bond, it camped four days later on the shores of Lake Timsah in the Suez Canal, and was transferred[20] from the IX British Corps to the I Anzac Corps, as it was to be employed in the area of that corps' command. Its new duties were to comprise bridge-building, the control and manning of existing bridges, the control of certain tugs and store-lighters, and the conveyance of military stores from post to post, within the limits of what was called Suez Canal No. 2 Section, which included Ferry Post, just north of Lake Timsah, and Serapeum, half-way between Timsah and the Great Bitter Lake.

On the 11th of February two parties were detached to the new stations, Lieutenant Bond with 57 men taking over the ferries, bridge, piers, and wharves at Serapeum, and

[18] Lieut. H. F. Shepherd. Member of Aust. Permanent Forces; of Guildford, W. Aust.; b. London, 7 Dec., 1874.

[19] This was not the final evacuation of the Suvla position. That took place on the night of the 19–20th.

[20] The facts in this connection are not quite clear. On reaching Mudros the Train was attached to the 11th Division once more, but on the 26th of December was transferred "temporarily to A. & N.Z. Army Corps." For some time afterwards, however, disciplinary matters were dealt with by Admiral Wemyss. On the 5th of February it was certainly under the direct orders of Gen. Birdwood.

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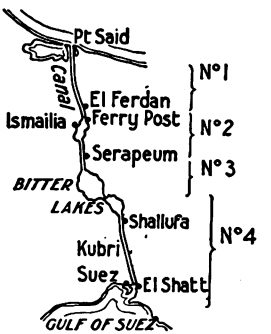
Sub-Lieutenant Hicks[21] with 65 doing the same at Ferry Post. Lieutenant-Commander Bracegirdle, who had returned to duty on the 31st of January, remained at the central camp. This was a peaceful and healthy, but very monotonous, period; at headquarters the Train seems to have occupied itself mainly in experimenting with iron pontoons for light bridges and helping other parties at the Ismailia Canal Works, while the detached parties ran ferries and punts across the canal day and night, and "formed" and "broke" the big pontoon bridges five or six times a day.



CANAL BRIDGEHEADS & SECTIONS

About the middle of March a curious situation arose out of the wish of several commanding officers to get the Train under their orders. Admiral Wemyss desired to absorb it into the naval forces under his command, and went so far as to suggest that it should be transferred bodily to Mesopotamia, to be there used partly for river-transport work, partly as guns' crews in the auxiliary craft in that theatre of war. The G.O.C. the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force—under whom, of course, the Anzac Corps was at the moment serving—flatly refused to part with the Train; it was engaged, he said, in "special work of a technical nature for which it was considered very suitable." Simultaneously Sir Julian Byng, then in command of the IX British Corps (with which the Train had served at Suvla), asked that it should be returned to him for canal work in the southern section.[22]

Late in April it became apparent that Byng had gained his end, for on the 26th orders were received by the Train to join the IX Army Corps at Suez. The Serapeum and Ferry

[21] Sub-Lieut. C. W. Hicks. Draughtsman; of Thornbury, Vic.; b. Melbourne, 13 Feb., 1894. (He subsequently served with the Australian artillery in France, attaining the rank of captain.)

[22] Lieut. Bond was at this time transferred from the Train to the Naval Intelligence Branch at Alexandria, being succeeded as second in command by Lieut. C. H. Read (of Randwick, N.S.W.).

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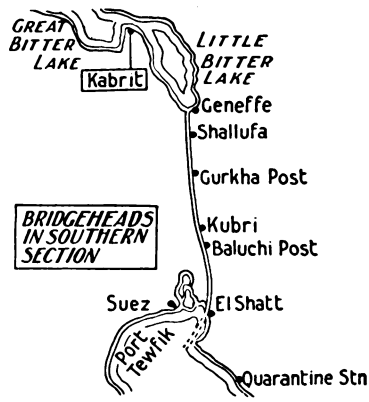
Post detachments were handed over to their successors on the 3rd of May, and next day the whole unit reached its new quarters in the southern section of the Canal. This extended from the southern end of the Great Bitter Lake well out into the Gulf of Suez; headquarters were fixed at Kubri West with a large detachment at Shallufa, and minor posts at Kabrit, Geneffe, Gurkha Post, Baluchi Post, El Shatt, Suez itself, Port Tewfik, and the quarantine station on the gulf. With the enlargement of its sphere of operations the Train's duties were also increased; to bridge-building and the control of existing bridges were now added the building of big piers and wharves, the manning of several tugs and lighters, the control of all military traffic crossing the Canal in that sector, and the construction and control of pumping machinery and filter-beds. Byng obviously knew what might be expected of the R.A.N.B.T., and used it to the full.



The control of floating traffic over so long a section required careful organisation, some details of which will be found in an appendix.[23] The new surroundings, too, were less peaceful and less healthy; air raids were frequent, and the climatic conditions—which included violent sand-storms—both ran the sick-list once more up into the twenties and much aggravated the discomforts of life. It must be remembered that at this time the Turkish forces were still in touch with the Canal, and occupied themselves constantly with attempts to damage it and blow up vessels passing through; while the British, besides guarding their main line of communication from India and Australia, were trying to push troops farther out into the desert, bringing up railhead just behind them, in order both to thrust the enemy far back from the Canal and to establish a

[23] *See Appendix No. 20.*

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base of operations against Palestine for future use. A typical minor operation—not performed by the Train, but daily under its notice—may be interesting here:—

Just before sunset each evening a wooden roller—approximately 8 feet across and 12 to 18 inches in diameter, with a chain bridle to which two horses or mules were harnessed tandem—left each bridge-head to proceed towards the next one along the sand parallel to the canal banks. Some rollers were taken clear through to the next bridge-head, others were met by a similar party coming from it. After arrival or meeting, the rollers were taken clear of the rolled track and left on the spot, the men in charge riding back to their posts, but carefully avoiding the rolled track.

At daylight next morning an officer would gallop from one post to the next, to ascertain whether the rolled track was clear—*i.e.*, whether there were signs of any passage across it, such as footprints or hoofprints. On receipt of a "clear" report, headquarters notified the Train's officer in charge of that section, and thereupon traffic across the canal was permitted normally through the day.

The object of these precautions was, of course, to make sure that no small Turkish raiding party had crept down to the canal banks during the night to place mines or infernal machines of any sort there. Such an attempt had been made, and the mine laid had blown out the forefoot of a large steamer.[24]

Among the work done at this time which is worth special mention is the construction of certain very solid wharves whereon to discharge the heavy engines needed for the desert military railways. The big piles to carry the decking thus used had to be driven in by special pile-drivers; and the Train took over two large lighters, converted them into floating pile-drivers and workshops, and in one of them installed complete quarters for the artificers as well as the crew, making the vessel self-contained. This, it may be observed, was only made possible by the abundance of supplies, which contrasted most markedly with their almost non-existence at Suvla. There the Train had been notable for its power of extemporising what was needed out of the most unlikely materials. In Egypt there was no necessity to do this, as the British Ordnance and Engineer Base Supply Departments willingly and readily met every demand. "As far as this unit was concerned," wrote Commander Bracegirdle, "delay in the supply of material was never known to occur, except where it had to be obtained from another Mediterranean base."

[24] From an account of the work of the R.A.N.B.T. supplied by one of its officers.

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It is interesting to note how far entries in the log reflect various episodes of the actual fighting in the Sinai Peninsula. The Turkish raid on Katia in April, and the British counter-attack and re-occupation, mainly affected bases in the northern section of the Canal, though "Artillery and transport to east bank," noted on the 23rd of April, probably had to do with the counter-attack. Just at that moment the Train was moved to the southern section; and, though the Turks had attacked this in 1915, their campaign of 1916 in Sinai was planned along the coastal route, and the main lines of the British counter-movement naturally started from the northern section. Still, on the 1st of July we find an entry "Slight increase in road traffic on No. 1 Bridge," which next day becomes "increase," goes on increasing daily, and on the 10th is "Heavy increase on road traffic of No. 1 Bridge." This bridge, moreover, for the next month is continually under repair. On July 20th—the day of the Turkish attack on the British railhead at Oghratina—there was an "air-raid by Taubes on El Shatt and Port Tewfik"; and two days later "All leave stopped for a week in No. 1 section." Finally on the 4th of August, the day of the great fight at Romani, No. 1 Bridge (which at this period was usually formed for traffic three times a day, two hours each time) "was formed practically all day," from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

But the period of practically defensive warfare on the Egyptian front had lasted too long, and army headquarters was busy on a plan of attack and advance into Palestine. The Train, though still normally occupied with its "back-area" duties on the Canal, was called in to help along the attack also. On the 15th of December the O.C. was entrusted with the particularly difficult, and at the same time essential, task of landing stores on the open coast of the Sinai Desert while a British attack designed to secure that strip of coast was actually going on.

The Turks were still at El Arish, with the British railhead fully twenty-five miles away to the west. An attack on El Arish, therefore, must be a surprise, carried out by the Desert Column and supported by the provision of supplies from seawards, since transport across the twenty-five miles of

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desert could not be assured in sufficient quantities and with the requisite speed. It was known that the bight off El Arish was mined; air-photographs gave exact location of the mines "like little black pinheads on the white sandy bottom." To sweep for these mines would, of course, at once disclose the British intentions; the task allotted to the Train was, therefore, to land under fire and at once construct through the mine-field two piers, each at least sixty feet long, with material to be there and then discharged from lighters; after which it would probably be entrusted with the landing of stores and ammunition in an open roadstead, and under Turkish fire, until the light railway could be brought across the intervening twenty-five miles.

As usual during these Egyptian operations, the Train had a free hand to requisition materials and craft; the O.C. was told to take any of the Canal Company's craft, any suitable tug, and all the timber and other material he wanted; and the Navy undertook to sweep the mine-field (a two-days' job at least) at the earliest possible moment. Bracegirdle accordingly took over a naval tugboat (the *Sir Hugh Bell*) and two 150-ton lighters, got his material down to Kubri, and set to work to cut and fit all piles and decking, make two portable pile-drivers, and devise floating stages and other paraphernalia. This work took from the 16th to the 19th of December, and on the 20th the little expedition left Kubri. At 10 p.m. on the 21st it put out from Port Said for El Arish, 120 miles away, escorted by motor-boats to ward off submarine attack. The subsequent operations are best told in the O.C.'s own words:—

> The expedition arrived off El Arish without mishap at 3.30 p.m. on the 22nd. . . . The tug, with lighters in tow, was headed direct for the beach, and at a given signal the lighters were slipped to continue their course for the beach through the surf. A heavy anchor with a 5-inch grass line attached was let go from the stern of each lighter, and was "brought to" round the bollards aft just before the forefoot touched the sand. The men promptly waded ashore, and fitted a holdfast to which a line was passed from the bow; by these means the lighters were kept stern on to the surf, and little difficulty was experienced in landing the materials. The tug meanwhile picked up an anchorage well out of the range of enemy artillery.
>
> The construction of a pier immediately commenced, and was continued throughout the night by the aid of acetylene flares. At 4 a.m. 75 feet of pile-driven piering, supporting five bays, was completed. At 7 a.m. the work of discharging the lighters was resumed, and soon (with the assistance of a military fatigue party) both lighters

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were discharged, refloated, and manœuvred seawards, to be picked up by the tug and taken back to Port Said. No one there had ever expected to see them again—if they were not blown up by mines, it was thought, they would certainly become total wrecks on the open beach; but the expedition was important enough to warrant their loss.

Unfortunately the estimated length of pier required to reach deep water was a long way out. In the end the pier had to be made 245 feet long; and even then weather conditions affected the depths so considerably that at the seaward end you could sometimes get 8 feet and sometimes only 4½ feet. Once, after an on-shore gale, a reef formed 60 feet off the pier with only 4 feet on it.

During these operations the enemy periodically bombed the vicinity of the camp, in endeavours to destroy the pier, while his long-range artillery made futile efforts to destroy the base.

In actual fact the landing was not so risky—apart from the weather and the enemy mines—as had been expected. Somehow the projected attack seems to have become known to the Turks, and they slipped out of El Arish on the night of the 19th, retiring inland to Magdhaba, from which they were driven by Australian light horse on the 23rd. This retirement, reported almost immediately by airmen, hastened by at least a day the advance of the Desert Column on El Arish, and it had been in British hands a full day before the Train arrived. This, of course, in no way detracts from the credit due for excellent organisation and neat performance of an operation expected to involve great risks.[25]

It is strange to note how, throughout the existence of the Train, it was stationed quite close to A.I.F. troops and yet was hardly ever in contact with them. In Gallipoli, as we have seen, only four miles separated them from the Anzacs; "and yet," wrote Bean,

> they are part of a world so separate that I do not think one Australian or New Zealander in a thousand knows that they are there, and they know practically nothing whatever of what happens at Anzac.

Just so in Egypt, though for a few months attached to the A.I.F., their operations had little to do with A.I.F. proceedings until the days of El Arish; and even there it is improbable that cameliers or light horse knew how much their operations depended on the work of other Australians. During the earlier Sinai operations (Romani and Katia) the light horse were

[25] Stress is here laid on this point, because for some reason official despatches seem to have ignored the expedition altogether. Thus Sir A. Murray merely says:—

> "On the 22nd December. . . . mine-sweeping operations were at once commenced in the roadstead. . . . while the erection of a pier was taken in hand. In forty-eight hours the roadstead was cleared of mines, and the supply ships from Port Said began unloading stores and supplies on the 24th."

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necessarily based on railways starting from the northern section of the Canal, well away from the sphere managed by the Train.

The naval character of the Train, also, was rarely if ever recognised. The only English account of its work discoverable —that in Major Gillam's *Gallipoli Diary*[26]—mentions it as military, and " regular " at that :—

> A pier further up, towards the end of the promontory, is being built rapidly and skilfully by a bridging party of regular Australian engineers. I am told by their warrant officer that there is a regular Australian army, but that it is being jealously guarded in Australia, and that really it is only a framework of an army. The bridging section at Suvla, however, is part of this.

The El Arish operations were the last of any importance that the Train was concerned with. With the advance into Palestine came relief from the necessity for Canal defences, and in January, 1917, it was decided to incorporate the Train into General Murray's army for work along the beaches. By February it was obvious that this work would not require anything like the Train's full strength, and various devices were suggested for reconstituting it and using the surplus personnel in other arms. The result, unfortunately, was that through a series of misunderstandings the Train disappeared as an effective force; about fifty of its strength joined the A.I.F., and the rest embarked at Suez in the last days of May, reached Melbourne in July, and were disbanded.[27]

[26] This *Diary* is worth study by those interested in the Train, since the author was at Suvla on Army Service duty from the 21st of August to the Evacuation, and gives a very graphic picture of the conditions under which beach work went on. He has only one other allusion to the Train as such: " To-day (17/11) it is very stormy, . . . and after it is over there will be much work for the Australian Bridging Section."

[27] A fuller account of these events—which need narration in order to do justice to a fine unit of the Australian naval forces—will be found in *Appendix No. 33.*

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CHAPTER XIII

TRANSPORTS, HOSPITAL SHIPS, AND DOCKYARDS

[In this chapter Australian ships—(1) of the coastal service, and (2) ex-enemy vessels trading for the Commonwealth Government and ordinarily manned by Australian officers and seamen—are marked with an asterisk. Lists showing (*a*) Australian merchant ships requisitioned for war-service, (*b*) the ex-enemy vessels, (*c*) the cargo steamers purchased by the Commonwealth, and (*d*) transports requisitioned by the Australian Government, are given, together with a summary of their experiences, in *Appendix No. 6.*]

AMONG the less conspicuous, but in no way less important, war services controlled by the Australian Naval Board were the choice, equipment, and despatch of the transports in which Australian troops were conveyed to and from their European battlegrounds. This work began with the outbreak of war, and lasted far beyond its conclusion. On the 3rd of August, before Britain had actually entered the war, the Commonwealth Government offered an expeditionary force of 20,000 men; at 9 a.m. on the 5th, as soon as it was known that the Empire was involved, Commander Thring telephoned to the military authorities:—

Do you wish the Naval Board to prepare a scheme for taking up transports? If so, from what ports, and to carry what numbers, what arms and horses?

Next day, the British acceptance of the offer having been received, a committee was appointed, and the work of ascertaining Australia's resources in the way of suitable shipping was commenced in earnest. The first committee consisted of the Third Naval Member (Captain Clarkson), the Director-General of Commonwealth Public Works (Lieutenant-Colonel Owen[1]), Major Manser,[2] Commander Brewis,[3] Commander Biddlecombe,[4] and Joseph Leask,[5] the

[1] Col. P. T. Owen, C.B.E. Director-General, Commonwealth Public Works, 1904/22; Consulting Military Engineer, A.M.F., 1904/26. Of Illawarra district, N.S.W.; b. Wollongong, N.S.W., 15 Sept., 1864.

[2] Maj. W. E. Manser; R.E. Of Hertfordshire, Eng., and Melbourne; b. Hertford, Eng., 18 Nov., 1870. Died of illness, 8 April, 1917.

[3] Capt. C. R. W. Brewis, C.B.E.; R.N. Principal Naval Transport Officer, Victoria, 1915/20. Of Henley-on-Thames, Eng., and Melbourne; b. Ibstone House, Bucks, Eng., 7 Oct., 1874.

[4] Commr. J. Biddlecombe; R.A.N. Of Geelong, Vic.; b. 1 Nov., 1868.

[5] J. Leask, Esq. Commonwealth Naval Ship Constructor since 1911. Of St. Kilda,, Vic.; b. Burntisland, Scotland, 2 Aug., 1880.

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naval ship constructor, with H. B. G. Larkin[6] (who was borrowed from the Australasian United Steam Navigation Company) as secretary. In the subdivision of the work Brewis was made Naval Transport Officer, Owen and Manser Military Transport Officers, and Biddlecombe was given control of office arrangements. Commander Robins[7] was made transport officer for Sydney (in *liaison* with Colonel Lee[8]), having, as his principal assistant, Commander Dunn,[9] who, after the despatch of the A.N. & M.E.F. and of the first contingent of the A.I.F., succeeded him and for years shouldered the work in Sydney. Dunn and his staff occupied a special office at Circular Quay, and it was largely a result of his tact and care, and that of his predecessor, that the relations between the transport office and the shipping companies were consistently cordial.

Vessels in Australian ports and those known to be approaching the coast were at once listed, and at the earliest opportunity inspected and measured (where possible, by the Naval Transport Officer) with a view to ascertaining their suitability for carrying troops or horses. Those considered suitable were at once measured up by Leask, who forthwith prepared plans for their conversion into transports. Many of them were at the time fully loaded, and several already chartered for destinations beyond the Commonwealth; but agents and owners acquiesced readily in the naval decisions, and gave the committee every assistance in their power. The first list of twenty-eight requisitioned vessels included nine steamships of over 10,000 tons, the largest being the *Euripides*—an Aberdeen White Star vessel of 15,050 tons —and the smallest the *Saldanha,* a Bucknall liner of only 4,594 tons: ten of them had no provision for refrigerated cargo.

[6] H. B. G. Larkin, Esq., C.B.E. General Manager, Australian Commonwealth Shipping Line, 1916/23; Chairman, Australian Commonwealth Shipping Board, 1923/28. Of Melbourne; b. Plumstead, Kent, Eng., 6 March, 1872.

[7] Capt. J. F. Robins; R.A.N. A.D.C. and Private Secretary to the Governor of N.S.W., 1913/14. Of Datchet, Bucks, Eng.; b. London, 29 Oct., 1875.

[8] Col. J. H. A. Lee. Of Edinburgh, Scotland, and Adelaide; b. Calcutta, India, 13 May, 1853. Died 18 Dec., 1927.

[9] Capt. A. C. Dunn, C.B.E.; R.A.N. Of Gordon, N.S.W.; b. Adelaide, 21 March, 1863. Died 24 Sept., 1921.

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The process of conversion entailed alterations of a very drastic character. In nearly every vessel the whole of the passenger accommodation had to be gutted, and often the electric wiring and water-supply systems had to be dislocated and renewed; further, the galley and lavatory accommodation needed much enlargement. Notwithstanding these hindrances, fitting proceeded expeditiously, speed grew with experience, and by June, 1915, it was found possible to equip fully in no more than sixty hours the *Demosthenes,* an 11,000-ton steamship carrying 1,500 troops, while the *Palermo,* a 7,600-ton horse-transport, was in fifty-three hours fitted to take 360 horses. The feeding of the troops was arranged on the basis of a fixed scale of rations to be provided by the ship-owners at a *per capita* rate, which after many conferences between the owners' representatives and Fleet Paymaster Treacy[10] was settled at sixteen-pence[11] per day for privates, 3s. 3d. for warrant officers and sergeants, and 6s. for commissioned officers.

By the 27th of September the last of the twenty-eight transports was completely equipped; some had been ready as early as the 12th. Three—the *Euripides, Hororata,* and *Suffolk*—were fitted at Brisbane, the rest at Sydney or Melbourne. They were now allotted to the ports where troops awaited them. Four went to Brisbane, eleven to Sydney, nine to Melbourne, and four to Adelaide; but Melbourne was also served by two of the Brisbane and three of the Sydney contingent, and one horse-transport (the *Hymettus*) embarked quotas at Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide. Hobart was served by the *Geelong* from Melbourne, and its horses were put aboard a Sydney transport. Two of the Adelaide ships picked up Western Australian troops at Fremantle, and at Albany a small contingent of Imperial reservists was put aboard the *Miltiades,* which had embarked others from New South Wales and Victoria. In all, Queensland embarked 2,206 men and 1,146 horses; New South Wales, 7,093 and 2,497; Victoria, 7,912 and 2,949; South Australia, 1,637 and 1,011; Tasmania, 897 and 275; and Western Australia,

[10] Paymaster Capt. A. M. Treacy, O.B.E.; R.A.N. Of Melbourne; b. Newstead, Vic., 28 April, 1869.

[11] The minimum rate was after six months raised to eighteen-pence, and later to 1s. 10d. The higher rates were never altered.

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1,784 and 4. That is, 21,529 men and 7,882 horses were accommodated aboard a fleet aggregating 237,885 tons—no inconsiderable achievement in view of a six weeks' voyage through tropical seas. It may be added that the loss among the horses during the voyage was only three per cent., instead of the ten or fifteen per cent. which the experience of other wars had led the authorities to expect.

II

The story of the First Convoy has already been told.[12] But a few additional details are worth recording. In October Captain Gordon Smith, who was at the time Second Naval Member of the Naval Board, was appointed Naval Transport Officer to the convoy, with Staff Paymaster Parker[13] as his secretary. Smith left Melbourne aboard the *Orvieto* (the flagship of the transport-fleet) on the 21st of the month. At Albany on the 28th he conferred with Captain Kiddle[14] of H.M.S. *Minotaur,* Captain Silver of H.M.A.S. *Melbourne,* and Captain Kato of the Japanese battle-cruiser *Ibuki.* News had arrived of a revolt among the Dutch in South Africa; the Admiralty had accordingly decided to divert the convoy to the Cape route; and it was decided to send the slower ships of the convoy under escort of the *Minotaur*[15] direct to Cape Town, and the faster ships with the *Melbourne* and *Sydney* to the Mauritius and thence to Cape Town, the *Ibuki* (whose coal-supply would not last her, except at too low a speed) being used only to escort two transports from Fremantle to join the main body at sea. The *Ibuki* therefore sailed for Fremantle at once. The transports were for some days occupied with the tedious business of coaling and watering, for which they had to enter the inner harbour two or three at a time; the weather was bad, the resources of the port very limited, and the strain on all concerned heavy and continuous; nevertheless by the evening of the 31st all preparations were complete, and at 6.25 a.m. on the 1st of

[12] From the navy's side earlier in this volume (*pp. 150-64, 179-81, 202-4*), and from the troops' side in *Vol. I (1st edition), pp. 94-114.*

[13] Paymaster Commr. C. A. Parker; R.A.N. Of East Kew, Vic.; b. Gloucester, Eng., 17 May, 1879.

[14] Admiral Sir E. B. Kiddle, K.B.E., C.B.; R.N. Of Alverstoke, Hants., Eng.; b. Alverstoke, 2 Nov., 1866. Died 29 Apr., 1933.

[15] The *Minotaur* was the only warship with a coal-supply sufficient to take her through to Cape Town.

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November the first division of the convoy left King George's Sound without incident. In the afternoon of the 31st the orders to proceed *viâ* Cape Town had been cancelled from England, and the fleet made for Colombo,[16] the *Ibuki* with the two Western Australian troopships joining at 4 p.m. on the 3rd of November.

As might have been expected in circumstances so novel, the transports took some time to attain the necessary discipline. At nights the lines drew out overmuch, and the lighting of the ships was dangerously conspicuous; station-keeping was poor, and signalling very irregular.[17] "Obtaining replies to signal EOP last night," remarked the *Orvieto* severely on the 4th of November, "occupied several hours. . . . Attention is drawn to the extreme importance of keeping ships closed up in station. By allowing their ships to straggle to double their distance, as happened yesterday, the masters greatly add to the responsibilities of the escorting cruisers." On the 5th "all A transports"—that is, the Australian-chartered ships; those of New Zealand had already benefited by several weeks' practice—were again ordered to take up

[16] Some of the sailing orders for the convoy are given in *Appendix No. 16.*

[17] Claude Farrère, the author of an interesting book on the naval war in the Pacific (*Combats et Batailles Sur Mer, 1914, pp. 110-11*), has a notable passage on the progress of this convoy:—

"Thirty-eight merchantmen! What a mob; Think of it—all their lives these merchant-skippers have sailed one by one on their own, each man choosing his own route, each regulating his speed by the pressure in his boilers. All of a sudden they are ordered to sail in convoy at fixed intervals, regulating their speed to the quarter-turn of the screw; they are subjected to a discipline so strict, and so necessary, that naval men attain it only by long practice in exact observation and continuous watchfulness.

"That sort of navigation is not learnt in a day or even in a month. It upsets the British merchant-masters' routine so thoroughly that the line of vessels begins to string out indefinitely. It is all very well to put the slowest at the head of the line; in the end they find themselves at the tail-end, and even straggling behind. . . .

"At night it is worse. They are all much more afraid of running into each other than of being attacked by an enemy; each keeps well away from his neighbours; lights are shown without hesitation, in spite of the formal order to mask them. By the morning the convoy, which should cover about five miles, stretches away for fifteen or sixteen. The laggards have to be waited for, and come hurrying up anyhow.

"Imagine the sudden attack of a raider at midnight on this shapeless mass. She would have no doubts; every ship would be an enemy; she would use gun and torpedo indiscriminately on the mob, and then disappear in the darkness. The escorting cruisers, afraid of firing on their convoy, would be almost unable to reply. And that would mean disaster—perhaps 20,000 men drowned.

"Twenty thousand men lost . . . a naval Jena: and worse . . . the disgrace of the British Navy and a crushing blow to the generous impulses of the Pacific Dominions."

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their correct stations, and the *Minotaur* found it necessary to steam down between the lines and reprove masters who were careless:

> During last night the second division straggled to seven miles, whereas their distance should have been three miles: the third division straggled to six miles, whereas their distance should have been three and a half miles. . . . The *Medic* and *Geelong* were signalling last night with lights visible at least ten miles.

On the 9th, when the *Emden* had been found and destroyed, the *Melbourne* took occasion to point a moral:

> On Sunday night the *Emden* probably passed within twenty miles of the convoy. The wireless was silent, and the van of convoy so well darkened that she might have passed five miles ahead of us. Had she passed astern of us certain Australian ships were showing lights visible six miles or more, and *Emden's* torpedoes would probably have taken toll of the convoy before the escort could attack her.

Another defect in discipline was the reckless throwing overboard of ships' rubbish. "Ten wooden cases and one sack," said the *Orvieto* on the 5th, "were observed floating in water of first division yesterday," and a few days later the commander was stirred to sarcasm:—

> In spite of my signal this morning bags and boxes have been thrown overboard from some ships to-day. This is not a paper-chase.

On the 5th a new risk was incurred. The mail-steamship *Osterley* caught up with and passed close to the fleet, and was severely rebuked for giving her passengers a chance to observe movements which might be prematurely disclosed at Colombo by any of them who were careless or disaffected. At the same time her rashness had its uses, for Captain Kiddle was able to send to Colombo by her the details of the convoy's requirements there, which must otherwise have been transmitted by radio and might thus have given the *Emden* a hint of the convoy's approach. Signalling during this part of the voyage was always a problem; Kiddle refused even to close the Cocos group within "buzzer" range, and—though at first the *Orvieto* used short wireless to transmit fleet orders, and the replies were made by visual signalling (preferably by flashing lamp)—after leaving Australian waters the flashing lamp was used only in urgent cases, and when nearing the Cocos group the "buzzer" was forbidden after dark.[18] At this time, too, absolute darkness (except

[18] The use of wireless is further discussed in *ch. xiv.*

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for the shaded stern-lights) was ordered on all vessels throughout the night; this procedure was maintained until the 11th, when it became known that no enemy cruiser was at large in the Indian Ocean.

At Colombo it was possible to take stock of the losses during this first Australian experiment in convoy work. Between Albany and Colombo four men had died (of pneumonia), 142 horses had been lost, and about ten tons of fodder in one vessel had been badly damaged by water. One vessel (the *Suffolk*) had found her wireless apparatus quite useless; two (the *Hororata* and *Anglo-Egyptian*) suffered from temporary breakdowns in their steering gear. Between Colombo and Aden thirty more horses were lost, two minor accidents happened to machinery, and on the 21st a collision occurred in mid-ocean between the *Ascanius* (which had just been assigned a new position in the line) and the *Shropshire,* which made a 24-foot hole in the former ship's port bow, fortunately above the water-line.

At Aden the whole convoy was reassembled during the 25th; and here (according to an account subsequently written by Captain Gordon Smith) information came to hand that the Turks had extinguished all the lights in the Red Sea. It was also rumoured that they had brought on camels a large number of mines for distribution in some of the narrow channels.

The absence of lights in the southern part of the Red Sea caused us a little anxiety. There are a lot of rocks and small islands scattered about near the entrance, and the currents are strong and rather irregular. We took a very unusual route on account of the possibility of mines. Fortunately, the weather was clear, and the captain of the *Orvieto*, having passed through it regularly six times a year, knew the Red Sea from end to end.

It was a good thing he did. On the first night we sighted ahead the shadowy shapes of a group of islands that ought not to have been there according to our reckoning; the convoy was steering straight for them. The question was, on which side of them should we go? The captain, fortunately, recognised one of the lumps by its outline, and we had just time to signal an alteration of course, which took us clear of the whole group. It was a bit exciting. We barely cleared them. If we had tried to pass on the other side we should have put the whole convoy on a rocky shoal.

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The convoy passed through the Suez Canal on the 2nd of December and following days, and began to disembark troops at Alexandria on the 3rd.

III

Before any of the transports of the First Convoy could return to Australia, a second contingent of troops was ready to be sent to Egypt. It therefore became necessary to requisition another fleet, sixteen vessels in all, and among these were five enemy ships that had been seized in Australian harbours at the outbreak of war.[19] All had been condemned by the prize court and handed over by the Admiralty to the Naval Board for use as might seem fitting; and the five—the *Melbourne, Sumatra, Pfalz, Hobart,* and *Cannstatt,*[20] of tonnage ranging from 5,900 to 7,500—were refitted for transport work before the end of December, a sixth, the *Hessen*[21] (5,099 tons), being added to the transport list in the following February.[22] Of this second convoy a higher proportion (seven out of sixteen) were of over 10,000 tons, and included the 18,000-tonner *Ceramic,* which could accommodate 2,800 troops. On the 28th of December the fleet was assembled at Albany, Commander Brewis being appointed Principal Naval Transport Officer, himself sailing in the *Ulysses.* No escort of warships was required, but the *Berrima,* which during the occupation of New Britain had been armed and temporarily added to the Australian navy, headed the convoy with the submarine *AE 2* in tow. Three New Zealand transports formed part of this convoy. On the 31st the fleet proceeded out of King George's Sound, leaving there two ex-enemy ships, then serving as horse-transports, which had developed defects. The sailing order shown in the inset[23] (on the next page) was considerably modified during the voyage to Colombo, as the three White Star liners (*Ceramic, Suevic,* and *Persic*) were found to be short of coal and had to be diverted direct to Aden; the *Borda* was

[19] *See pp. 45-6 and Appendices Nos. 6, 8, and 11.*

[20] Renamed the *Boonah,** *Barunga,** *Boorara,** *Barambah,** and *Bakara** respectively.

[21] Renamed the *Bulla.**

[22] The new names given to the captured enemy steamers, and the use to which they were put, are fully shown in *Appendix No. 6, Section II.*

[23] The inset shows the order of sailing as on Jan. 2, after the arrival of the *Ajana* from Fremantle.

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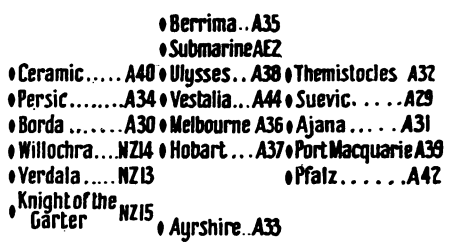
therefore placed astern of the *Themistocles,* and the New Zealand vessels had the port line to themselves. The voyage was almost lacking in incident. Occasionally the submarine's towline parted and she was forced to carry on under her own power; one small horse-transport, the *Ayrshire,* was found deficient in speed and was allowed to lag behind; and on the 21st of January, when the fleet was nearing Aden, a strange cruiser, which flew the white ensign but did not answer the signals made to her, alarmed the convoy-commander into detaching the *AE 2* to guard the convoy's starboard beam. The stranger, however, proved to be the Royal Indian Marine ship *Dufferin.* On the 28th the convoy reached Suez, the *Bakara** (one of the vessels left behind at Albany) arriving on the 29th; as it passed through the Canal on the 31st the Turkish operations against the Canal Defence force (described in the first volume of this series) had already begun, and armed guards were stationed on the transports' decks.



For the next two years transports were despatched sometimes in groups, sometimes singly as they became ready, without naval escort of any kind. They were, however, for official purposes grouped as "convoys," and the records show that twenty-seven of these convoys left Australia in two years, carrying nearly 253,000 troops (including a few naval and civilian passengers) and nearly 25,000 horses. The detailed figures vividly show the quick response of Australians to the news from the seat of war. Thus in May-June, 1915, "Convoy 6" took away 14,000 troops as against about 3,000 each for the two previous convoys. The despatch of the 3rd Division and heavy reinforcements caused the embarkations for "Convoy 21" (June, 1916) to rise to over 25,000 against a previous average that year of about 9,000. The despatch

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of horses was very irregular. The first six convoys took away over 25,000; another 7,000 went in four convoys, during January-April, 1916 (when the light horse were being reorganised for the desert campaign); in twelve out of the twenty-nine there were no horse-transports at all. This irregularity was mainly due to the experience of the *Palermo*, which sailed in May, 1915, with 360 horses aboard, and lost half of them on the voyage. The British authorities at once concluded that the conveyance of horses through the Red Sea in monsoon conditions would become too expensive, and in June orders came from the Admiralty to divert all horse-transports then at sea to India, and to send away no more until November. The resumption early in 1916 was prompted by the preference of Australian troops for Australian horses, and the British War Office yielded to this preference as far as to suggest in August, 1916, the purchase of 8,000 horses for use in Palestine; but in November, before many of this consignment had been shipped, transport was again suspended on the ground of a shortage of tonnage, the Shipping Control Committee, when its action was questioned, ordering that all existing horse-transports must be used for the carriage of wheat to England.

It was the difficulty of securing the removal of cargo —especially wheat—from Australia which had, during 1916, forced the Australian Prime Minister, then in England, to purchase a number of cargo-vessels with which he established a government shipping line. As the purchased ships did not carry troops, this transaction and the conditions which led to it are part of the subject-matter for another volume.[24] Reference to it here is only necessary in order to make clear that there were now three classes of merchant ships serving under more or less direct control of the Australian Government:

(1) British (and a few Australian) ships chartered as transports;

[24] *Vol. XI—Australia During the War.* It may be mentioned here, however, that the statement in Fayle's *Seaborne Trade, Vol. II, p. 341*, that, though bought to carry wheat, these ships "were not put into the wheat trade, but employed outside the war zone, chiefly in the Pacific services" is entirely inaccurate (see the detailed account of the "Austral" ships, *Appendix No. 6, Section III*).

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(2) cargo-steamers bought by the Commonwealth and manned chiefly by British officers and crews (though these were at an early stage placed on Australian articles);

(3) ex-enemy ships, manned by Australian officers and crews, six of which were serving as transports and twelve as cargo-carriers.

The entry of the Commonwealth Government in the business of cargo-carrying precipitated, towards the end of 1916, certain differences which had earlier arisen between the Australian Government and British shipowners. Owners complained that their vessels—compulsorily requisitioned under the Australian Defence Acts as transports—were being used not only for the carriage of troops and warlike stores, but to earn profitable freight for the Commonwealth. They urged that government management often resulted in the ships sailing only half-full in spite of the existence of available cargo urgently needing to be carried; that ships were imperilled, and even damaged, by being ordered to carry cargo into harbours in which their owners would not have risked them; finally, that the Commonwealth was withholding from them their ships, while with ex-German and other vessels (some of which, they said, might have carried troops) it was competing in the very trades which the shipowners themselves had taken years to build up. The British Government, on the other hand, as far as possible avoided engaging in trade, its practice, when using merchant ships as transports, being to allow the owners to book cargoes at least for the return voyages. The resentment of shipowners against the Australian Government was of course sharpened by the huge rise in freights, of which advantage they were partially deprived. In appeals to the Admiralty, Board of Trade, and eventually to the Prime Minister of Great Britain, they questioned the legal right of the Australian Government to take over British ships. One company went so far as to advertise that it would accept cargo on its own account for a ship then in Glasgow under Commonwealth requisition. The Admiralty, however, promptly stepped in and requisitioned the vessel.

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The case for the Australian Government was at least as strong as that of the owners. The Commonwealth possessed very few ships of the class required for the sending of the A.I.F. to Europe; if, therefore, the troops were to be sent, British ships had to be taken over. They had to be fitted, at high cost to Australia, as troopships and horse-transports, and, if the military effort was not to be unduly hampered, it was necessary that they should return as regularly as possible, with their fittings still in them. If owners were allowed to load them for the return voyage and determine the ports of call, there was certainty of delay; even the use to which the transports were unavoidably put by the Admiralty—for shipping troops to East Africa, for example—prevented these ships, often for very long periods,[25] from returning to Australia. To prevent dislocation of this vital service, Australia had to increase her requisitions; thus by February, 1917, the number of requisitioned vessels had increased to seventy, and several mail-steamships were also employed in the carriage of troops. It was recognised that the needs of the British Government in this matter were paramount; but it is nevertheless only fair to point out that, according to calculations made, if the transports could have been used for Australian purposes only, the work could have been done with forty-five or fifty. The suspicion entertained by British owners that the Australian authorities allowed considerations of cargo-carrying to interfere with the despatch of their transports—or to limit the space available for troops—was baseless. The

[25] For example, the *Kyarra,** *Medic, Barunga,** and *Boonah** all left Australia in the last quarter of 1916 with troops and cargo for England. On their way back to the Commonwealth, the *Kyarra,** *Barunga,** and *Boonah** were together employed by the Admiralty for about three months for the purpose of carrying Nigerian troops from Sierra Leone to Kilwa Kisiwani, Dar-es-Salaam, and Zanzibar. The *Medic* conveyed Imperial troops from Plymouth to Dar-es-Salaam. Diversion by the Imperial authorities occurred sometimes in the case of ex-enemy steamers, but frequently in that of the chartered transports. Unavoidable delays at congested ports (such as London, Liverpool, Marseilles, Le Havre, and Bordeaux) also contributed to the trouble. For example, at the end of 1916 the *Boorara,** *Pera, Botanist, Clan Macgillivray,* and *Mashobra,* all carrying wheat cargoes for France, were each kept waiting for several weeks at either Le Havre or Bordeaux before berthing accommodation could be provided for them. The effect of these delays and of diversions of transports by the British Government is seen in the fact that, of the 28 ships of the first Australian convoy, only ten were back in time to embark the third contingent (February 1915), five in time for the fourth (April), and six more before the end of July; three were handed back to their owners, one (the *Orvieto*) was converted by the Admiralty into an auxiliary cruiser, and the other four were employed in European waters until the middle of 1916. Those ships of the First Convoy which suffered least delay accomplished five round trips between October 1914 and February 1917; the quickest of the Second Convoy made four only.

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whole effort of the Australian transport staff was for despatch, and the fact that the ships sometimes returned with little or no cargo was due to this cause.

Eventually, the question of Australia's right to requisition and retain ships was, by agreement, shelved, and in January, 1917, an arrangement was made by which, under certain conditions, owners would load their ships for the return voyage. But, almost before the ink upon it was dry, there had occurred a development which rendered it obsolete.

IV

On the 9th of January, 1917, the German Government made, and on the 31st announced to the world, its decision to enter on a period of unrestricted submarine warfare. With the exception of a few specified channels, the whole area of the Mediterranean and the eastern Atlantic was declared unsafe, any vessels found within it being liable to destruction by Germany's submarines. This brought about two great changes in the Australian transport system. In the first place the Admiralty at once prohibited the embarkation of troops until it became possible to provide suitable escort for the troopships; in the second, the huge ensuing loss of British shipping compelled the British Controller of Shipping to requisition for Imperial purposes all steamships trading between Britain and Australia, and this action was in June, 1917, extended to Australian transports. The *Euripides*, which on her previous voyage had carried over 2,000 men, sailed in March, 1917, with sixteen only, of whom six were civilians; and out of 678 men officially credited to "Convoy 30" (February-April) a single mail-steamer, the *Morea*, which sailed before the end of February, took 526. Moreover, whereas the so-called convoys from 3 to 30 comprised ships sailing independently and without escort, "Convoy 31," which sailed from Fremantle on the 22nd of May, 1917, with nearly 10,000 troops, resumed the character of an escorted fleet, and subsequent convoys were despatched either in this form or by various routes, some even using the Panama Canal. From June onwards the Australian transports were steadily released into Imperial control, thirty being thus handed over within six months; the few remaining after January, 1918, were

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transferred to the Commonwealth Government's shipping line. Under the new régime Australian reinforcements were carried to Europe in transports under Imperial control. The fleet of seventy-four transports, which the Commonwealth had gradually accumulated, were in the end thus disposed of:

Handed over to Admiralty	52
Handed back to owners	7
Handed over to Government of India	1
Handed over to Commonwealth Government Line	6
Converted into hospital-ships	2
Sunk while employed under Naval Board ..	6

V

Australian transports were almost continually at sea, but the greater part of their voyaging was done in waters comparatively free from German submarines; it is, therefore, not surprising that few of them were sunk, or even damaged, by enemy action. Only five were thus sunk, and of these only one—the *Ballarat*—while engaged in carrying troops. The first Australian transport to encounter submarines was the *Argyllshire,* which, on the 27th of May, 1915 (being at the time on Imperial service), was attacked near the mouth of the English Channel by two submarines, one of which discharged two torpedoes at her without effect. The first actual loss was that of the *Geelong,* which on the 1st of January, 1916, was sunk in collision with an Admiralty collier, the *Bonvilston.* Both vessels were on Imperial service and under orders to proceed at full speed without lights, and the collision was afterwards described by a judge as "so much inevitable that it could not be attributed to the negligent navigation of one vessel or the other." On the 18th of the same month the *Marere,* also on Imperial service, was attacked and sunk 236 miles from Malta by a submarine which shelled her effectively, her own 3-pounder gun proving quite useless in retaliation. The value of a heavier armament was soon emphasised by the experience of another Australian transport, the *Uganda,* which on the 17th of June was similarly attacked and adopted similar manœuvres, but was able with her

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4.7-inch guns to drive off the enemy. On the 20th of December the *Itonus,* four days out from Marseilles with a cargo for Australia, was torpedoed by a new submarine whose captain claimed to have sunk four other British vessels already, and who destroyed a sixth while the boats of the *Itonus* were still drifting in the neighbourhood. A few days later (on the 26th of December) the *Suffolk* struck a mine in the English Channel, but reached Portsmouth under her own steam, and was soon again on active service.

In 1917, as might be expected, the casualties were more severe, especially at the beginning of the year. In November, 1916, eight transports and two temporarily-requisitioned steamers left Australian waters almost together, and three of these met with serious misfortune. The *Port Nicholson*—which, though not a transport, carried 1,000 troops from Sydney to Plymouth—was on the 15th of January mined near Dunkirk; the *Argyllshire* was torpedoed on the 5th of February just outside Plymouth, but made port on a single screw; the *Afric* on the 12th of the same month was twice torpedoed off the Eddystone. Six days later the *Berrima,* after landing 1,600 troops at Plymouth, was torpedoed off Portland, but was safely beached. Not long afterwards the *Orsova,* which had brought about 900 Australian troops to England and was on her way down Channel to pick up Imperial troops for Egypt, was torpedoed in the same neighbourhood, but also brought into port.

In none of these cases were troops involved. But the next sinking might have been a great disaster. On the 19th of February, 1917, the *Ballarat*—an 11,000-ton liner with a nominal speed of fourteen knots—left Melbourne on her fourth voyage as a transport, with 1,600 troops aboard. At Cape Town she coaled, taking on 2,000 tons of Transvaal coal of inferior quality; while there was still enough Australian coal to mix with it, this did not greatly reduce her speed. On the 10th of April, however, she joined a convoy at Sierra Leone, but soon began to drop behind, being unable to make more than nine knots; her master asked leave to get Welsh coal at St. Vincent, but was refused, and the whole convoy had to conform to her slow pace. When nearing Britain the vessels separated, each being escorted by a destroyer, and

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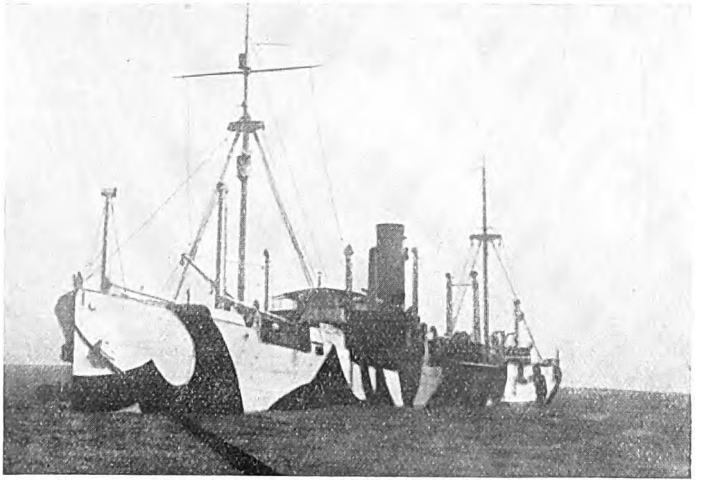
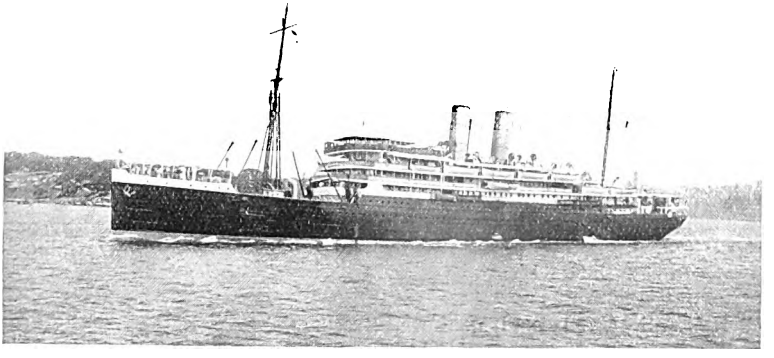


THE *Boorara*, ON 20 MARCH 1918, HALF-AN-HOUR AFTER SHE HAD BEEN TORPEDOED

Lent by Capt. J. Buchanan.



THE *Indarra*

Lent by Messrs. MacDonald, Hamilton, & Co.

To face p. 420.

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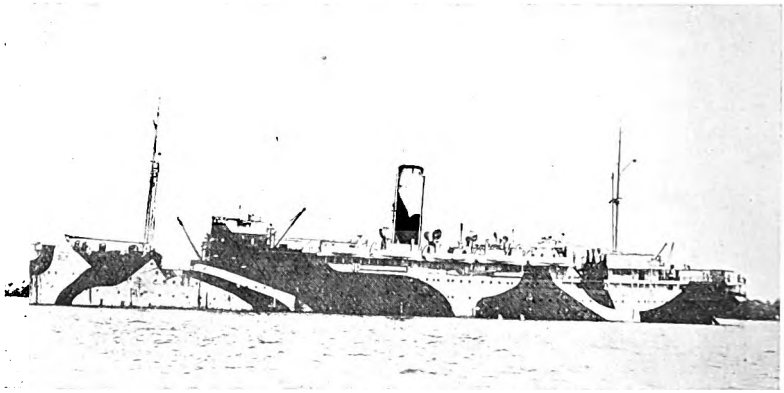
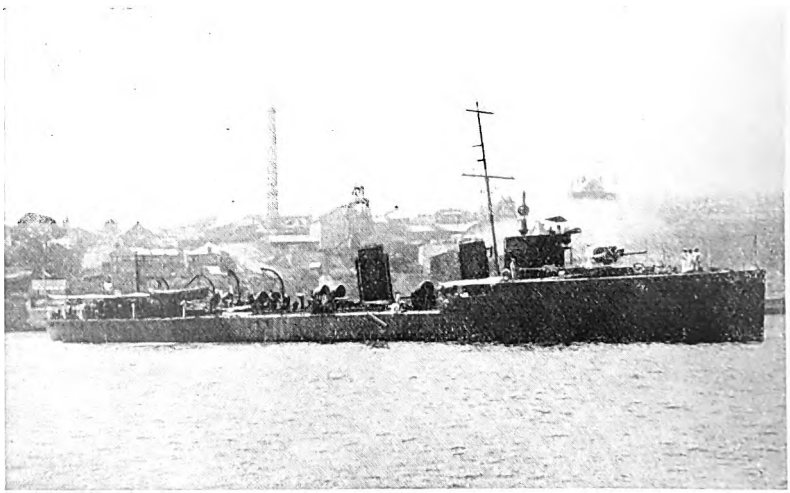


THE AMBULANCE-TRANSPORT *Warilda*

Lent by Capt. J. Sim.



H.M.A.S. *Huon* IN IRON COVE, SYDNEY, DURING HER TRIALS IN DECEMBER, 1915

Lent by Engineer-Commr. O. A. Ireland, R.A.N.
Aust. War Memorial Collection No. EN425.

To face p. 421.

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the *Ballarat* proceeded with H.M.S. *Phœnix,* zigzagging as she went—which further reduced her speed to about eight knots. About 2 p.m. on the 25th[26] a torpedo struck her, inflicting such grave damage that the main engines were soon under water. The troops were taken off by destroyers and drifters, and attempts were made to tow the vessel into shallow water, but she sank seven and a half miles off The Lizard. No lives were lost out of the 1,752 souls aboard—a result due mainly to the perfect discipline of the troops and crew.

Only one more loss marked the year. On the 10th of July the *Seang Choon,* which had carried no troops since the end of 1916, was on her way to England with a cargo of Australian produce when a submarine torpedoed her near Cape Clear on the Irish coast. Two of the ship's boats were unable to free themselves before she sank, and were therefore dragged down, four officers and fifteen lascars being drowned.

The story of the *Boorara** is worth telling. From the first days of the war she was in the public eye, for she was the first object fired on by an Australian gunner. She was the *Pfalz,* which on the morning of the 5th of August, 1914, tried to slip through Port Phillip Heads and was stopped by a shot from Fort Nepean.[27] Afterwards she was fitted up as a transport, renamed *Boorara,** and sent away in the second convoy. Like many other transports, she was then utilised by the Imperial authorities, and among other duties was sent to the Dardanelles to carry Turkish prisoners from Gallipoli. In the Ægean, on the 18th of July, 1915, she was rammed off Skyros by the French cruiser *Kléber;* but her bulkheads held, she was beached, patched up at Mudros, repaired at Naples, and early in 1916 was again on active service.

For some time she had nothing but good luck. But on the 20th of March, 1918, while homeward-bound to Australia with stud stock and general cargo, she was torpedoed in the Channel off Beachy Head. The torpedo ripped open and practically destroyed the engine-room, but, as there appeared to be a chance that the ship would float, and some trawlers

[26] *See Vol. XII, plate 324.* It was Anzac Day, and a memorial service was about to be held on board.

[27] *See pp. 45, 413, and Appendix No. 11.*

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came up, Captain Buchanan.[28] after sending to the trawlers the engineers and all hands that were not immediately required, had his ship taken in tow and managed to reach Southampton. No machinery, however, could be obtained there; she was therefore made seaworthy—it took four months—and then towed slowly to Newcastle. Before she could make that port, when two miles off Whitby on the 23rd of July, she was again torpedoed in exactly the same spot, the engine-room again gutted and the ship almost broken in two. Once more, however, her excellent bulkheads saved her. Captain Buchanan signalled to the tugs to continue towing, and she at length reached Newcastle to undergo repairs that took nearly twelve months.[29] Not until July, 1919, was she again in active service, and then on the happy task of repatriating Australian troops.

In July, 1918, there occurred an incident of which little was publicly known either at the time or afterwards, but which stands out, even in the fine record of the transports, as a striking example of coolness in face of danger. The steamer *Barunga**—formerly the German *Sumatra,* captured in Sydney at the outbreak of war, but thereafter manned with Australian officers and crew in the service of the Commonwealth Government—was on the 6th of July sent from London to Plymouth to embark 855 Australians, mainly invalids, for return to their country. On the way round to Plymouth at 11.45 a.m. on the 7th, a torpedo was fired at the ship. It was, however, sighted about 200 yards away on the port side, and by promptly turning to starboard the *Barunga** avoided a direct impact. The torpedo almost grazed the side, eventually coming to the surface a short distance away, and the ship proceeded safely to Plymouth.

Next day the returning troops, with twenty-seven naval ratings and four nurses, came aboard. The *Barunga** lay in the Sound until the 14th, when she pulled out, accompanied by H.M.S. *Kent,* three destroyers (*Midge, Lance,* and *Victor*), and several patrol-boats with captive balloons; between 10

[28] Capt. J. Buchanan. Commanded s.s. *Bakara,* 1914/16; s.s. *Boorara,* 1917/19. Master mariner; of Yan Yean, Vic.; b. Knock, Isle of Skye, 19 May, 1867.

[29] A fuller account of this and other incidents in the remarkable record of this ship is given in *Appendices Nos. 6 and 11.*

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and 11 p.m. the patrol-boats disappeared. Everyone aboard was, of course, wearing lifebelts continuously, but all went well until 4.20 p.m. next day, when, at a point 150 miles W. by S. ½ S. from Bishop Rock in the Scilly Isles, a torpedo crashed through the starboard bow into No. 1 hold. The submarine, hearing the explosion, immediately came to the surface, and the *Barunga's** gun fired two shells at it, but failed to hit the enemy before he dived again. The destroyers, which had been some miles away, were quickly on the scene, two of them circling the *Barunga** and dropping depth charges round the spot where the submarine had disappeared, while the third stood by to render assistance. The *Kent* continued on her way.

Immediately after the explosion occurred, the Chief Engineer put the engines astern to take the way off the ship, but in a few minutes received the order to stop them. Soon afterwards it was found that Nos. 1 and 2 holds were full of water. In the meantime the troops had moved to their respective boat-stations, and the inmates of the hospital, which was situated in the 'tween decks near the gaping hole in the ship's side, had been brought up; in some cases nominal rolls were called over. The men allotted to the rafts stood by coolly waiting for orders, and others assisted the ship's crew to put out the boats. While the boilers were blowing off steam, verbal orders could not be heard above the roaring noise, but the conduct of the troops was exemplary and at no time was there any congestion or confusion. One man, observing that there was no flag on the ship's stern, obtained permission to hoist a Union Jack.

Each of the ten life-boats, after discharging its occupants on to the destroyers, which successively stood by to be filled, returned to the ship for another load; in this work the Australian naval ratings were conspicuous. Many of the soldiers also gave up their places in the boat-line to mates who could not swim, and themselves dived overboard and swam to rafts; Lieutenant-Colonel Burnage[80] (the commander of the troops) did the same when two-thirds of the men had been removed. By these means all hands were saved.

[80] Col. G. J. Burnage, C.B., V.D. Commanded 13th Bn., A.I.F., 1914/15. Wine merchant; of Toronto, N.S.W.; b. Dungog, N.S.W., 14 Dec., 1858.

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At 7 o'clock, when the water was getting into No. 3 hold through the hatches and the ship's keel was visible aft, Captain Wilson,[31] together with the Chief Officer (L. S. Little[32]), the Chief Engineer (T. G. Lewis[33]), the adjutant of the troops (Lieutenant Connor[34]), and a medical officer (Major Montgomery[35]), left her, and two of the destroyers raced back to Plymouth with the rescued men, while the third stood by. At 10 p.m. the master and the chief officer again boarded her, and found that she was settling down; before midnight she disappeared.

The risks constantly run by such Australian vessels as were employed in dangerous waters may be illustrated from the experiences of the large coastal liner *Indarra.** In 1918 she was used by the British authorities to take infantry from the Palestine front to the hard-pressed defenders of Arras and Amiens; she was one of the "flying convoy" of 15-knot vessels—the others being the *Canberra** (another Australian coastal liner), the Orient liner *Omrah,* the P. & O. Company's *Malwa, Caledonia,* and *Kaiser-i-Hind,* and the Union Castle liner *Leasowe Castle.* The convoy's first trip brought 21,000 troops safely from Alexandria to Marseilles, under escort of six (sometimes eight or ten) Japanese destroyers. What followed its return to Alexandria is told by the *Indarra's** master[36]:—

May 1st. Left Alexandria at 3 p.m. with the complete second division of British troops from Palestine, 21,000 in seven ships—*Indarra** 2,000. Attacked by two submarines and torpedoes just after clearing swept channel at 4.30 p.m. Submarines seen. Torpedoes fired missed all ships by small margins. Darkness and fog coming on, we got away clear and formed up next morning at daylight under escort of eight destroyers (Japanese). Attacked again[37] at 7 a.m. off Sardinia; depth-charges and guns fired, but got clear. The *Indarra** struck a submerged obstruction close to where the destroyer was dropping depth-charges—the force of the impact was so great that it burst all our saloon pantry deck up (steel plates and tiles). . . .

[31] Capt. R. A. T. Wilson. Commanded s.s. *Bulla,** 1914/17; s.s. *Barunga,** 1917/18. Master mariner; of Caulfield, Vic.; b. Madura, India, 7 Nov., 1861.
[32] Capt. L. S. Little. Master mariner; of Fitzroy, Vic.; b. Ceylon, 27 Jan., 1886.
[33] Chief Engr. T. G. Lewis. Of Port Adelaide; b. Brighton, S. Aust., 23 April, 1871.
[34] Capt. G. M. Connor, 25th Bn., A.I.F. Civil engineer; of Brisbane; b. Co. Cavan, Ireland, 21 Feb., 1885.
[35] Maj. H. H. Montgomery, A.A.M.C. Medical practitioner; of Perth, W. Aust.; b. 18 May, 1880.
[36] Capt. M. M. Osborne. Commanded s.s. *Indarra,** 1917/18. Master mariner; of Cremorne, N.S.W.; b. Slane, Co. Meath, Ireland, 30 Oct., 1858.
[37] Several days later.

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May 7th. Arrived at Marseilles 10 a.m. Troops all entrained for the front by 6 p.m.

May 10th. Left Marseilles 11.30 p.m., escort the same eight Japanese destroyers.

May 12th. 6 a.m., submarines reported by *Malwa*. 7 a.m., attacked; torpedo seen approaching direct for *Indarra** on port side; missed *Indarra** by about 30 feet and struck the *Omrah* (next ship in convoy) abaft the foremast; exploded, and blew all her hatches off. The *Omrah* sank in two hours. One man was lost, having been killed by the explosion. Over 5,000 bags of mail matter went down in the ship. The crew were rescued by the destroyers and landed at Malta.

May 17th. Arrived at Alexandria 2.30 p.m.

May 26th. Left Alexandria with the 3rd division of British troops from Palestine, escort same eight Japanese destroyers and two sloops. Attacked by submarines and torpedoes on starboard side at midnight. Full moon, calm sea, and very clear and still. The attack was severe and effective, the *Leasowe Castle* being hit between the funnels and sunk in one and a half hours: 114 lost, including the captain of the ship, colonel of troops, 17 officers, 2 wireless operators, and 3 naval ratings. One submarine was seen on the surface by the 5th officer Murday[38] aft of the port beam. I thought I saw it myself when quite close to it.

June 1st. Arrived at Marseilles without any further mishap or adventure.

June 6th. Left Marseilles with reliefs and leave-expired men. Arrived Malta at 7.30 p.m. June 9th in bad weather. After coaling and watering, &c., sailed on the 11th at 1.30 p.m. Convoy was attacked by submarines on the 12th; several depth-charges let off and guns fired by Japanese escort. Convoy not damaged in any way. On the 14th attacked again by submarines outside the swept channel off Alexandria. This was the most severe attack of the series; it was said afterwards by the naval escort that there were three submarines seen attacking. The attack lasted about fifteen minutes, Japanese destroyer-escort firing guns and dropping depth-charges; three aeroplanes from Alexandria dropped depth-charges also, and other vessels from Alexandria were engaged as well. The attack, we heard afterwards, was expected, hence the reason for the aeroplanes and other vessels being out. I personally saw one submarine hit and blown up by aeroplane depth-charges (and Japanese), for the air was full of dirt and débris. No vessel in the convoy was hit. We heard afterwards that at least one submarine was sunk if not two—anyway they were not seen again about the place.

Arrived at Alexandria at 10.30 a.m. safely. Trooping in convoy finished this trip, and the convoy was broken up and disbanded.

June 18th. Left Alexandria for Taranto escorted by Japanese. Shortly after leaving, attacked by submarine; torpedo seen crossing our bow, but at a safe distance. Arrived at Taranto 21st at 1.30 p.m.

June 26th. Left Taranto—no escort available—at 1 p.m. Arrived at Alexandria at 11 a.m., June 29th; no excitement of any sort during the passage. Docked at Alexandria on July 21st for examination,

[38] Chief Officer H. G. Murday. Of Mosman, N.S.W.; b. Leicester, Eng., 12 Dec., 1897.

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cleaning, and painting. The marks of having run over and struck a submerged object were plainly visible on our bottom, from abreast of funnels to right aft to stern-post. Naval engineers and experts gave it as their opinion that the marks were probably caused by the conning-tower of a submarine, previously mentioned as having been run over and struck by us when attacked.[39]

The *Indarra** was afterwards employed in bringing an Indian regiment from Basra on the Persian Gulf to Salonica; between Port Said and Salonica she had the *Yarra* as one of her escorting destroyers. At Port Said, however, her Australian crew had left her, being replaced by Lascars. A submarine attacked the convoy in the Ægean, but was driven off by the destroyers.

VI

Apart from the transport service, several large Australian coastal liners were during the war requisitioned by the Commonwealth Government for use as hospital ships. The Adelaide Steamship Company's *Grantala** was thus used during the expedition to Rabaul; at the beginning of December, 1914, the *Kyarra** (A.U.S.N.) was sent to Egypt with five hospital units, but in March was converted into a transport; of the Australian transports, during August, 1915, the *Karoola** (McIlwraith McEacharn) and *Kanowna**[40] (A.U.S.N.) were taken over by the military authorities as Hospital Ships Nos. 1 and 2, and in July and August, 1916, the *Warilda** and *Wandilla** (both Adelaide S.S. Company) were respectively lent to the Admiralty for the same purpose. Of these the *Kyarra** was sunk in the English Channel on the 26th of May, 1918, and the *Warilda** in the same area on the 3rd of August.

The work of the hospital ships will be fully discussed in the medical history of the Australian forces,[41] but a few examples of their adventurous career are worth record here. The *Wandilla** had in July, 1915, when serving as a troopship, assisted in the defence of Aden; Turks from Mecca were attacking, and a large body of Arab auxiliaries, whom the British commander had enlisted and armed, promptly deserted to the Turkish side, taking with them all their stores

[39] This is mentioned in the captain's diary under May 1.
[40] *See Vol. XII, plate 39.*
[41] At present in preparation.

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and about 1,000 camels. "The emergency being ended," to quote the *Wandilla's** phlegmatic master, and the Australian reinforcements landed at Suez, the vessel took aboard at Alexandria 800 British sick and wounded troops, landed them at Plymouth, and proceeded to London with her cargo of wool and wheat. As she passed The Downs, she saw four large vessels lying awash, having struck mines in the neighbouring fairway; next, while berthed in Victoria Dock, she was bombed (but not hit) by German aeroplanes that did much damage in the East End of London and at Woolwich. Moving to Tilbury Dock, she came in for another aerial bombing, close enough to sever her mooring lines. Her return voyage to Australia *viâ* the Cape, and her second and third voyages as a transport as far as Egypt were uneventful. At Port Said she embarked the Scottish Borderers and the Inniskillings (evacuated from Gallipoli), took them to Marseilles, picked up at Malta about a thousand ex-hospital cases who had recovered, took them back to Alexandria, and went on through the Canal to Australia. A fourth voyage—with troops and cargo for England—ended at Liverpool, where the *Wandilla** was converted into a hospital ship. During her career as a troopship there was only one death on board among 9,000 troops carried, and no sickness. "My crew," wrote her then master,[42] "were all Australian seamen, and I had no trouble with them throughout."[43]

As a hospital ship she travelled far and wide. She steamed in all 112,241 miles, and carried 26,425 invalids—British from all the three kingdoms and Australia, West Africans, East Africans, and Portuguese—with a death-record of forty-two in three years. In the United Kingdom she visited Liverpool, Southampton, Avonmouth, Cardiff, Plymouth, Newport, and Dublin. She saw Le Havre, and Brest, and Lisbon; in the Mediterranean Gibraltar, Marseilles, Malta, Port Said, Alexandria, Mudros, Salonica, Stavros, Limasol, Suda Bay, Beirut, Alexandretta, Haifa, and Tripoli in Syria; in Africa Mombasa, Zanzibar, Dar-es-Salaam, Kilwa

[42] Capt. C. C. Mackenzie. Commanded s.s. *Wandilla,** 1915/17. Master mariner: of Lindfield, N.S.W.; b. Inverness, Scotland.

[43] The Australian crew of the *Wandilla** remained in her till June 1917, when, their articles having expired, they were sent back to Australia and a British crew signed on; the Australian officers continued to serve in her.

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Kisiwani, Cape Town, Lagos, Accra, and Sierra Leone. Of actual adventures during this period she had few; but in January, 1917, she picked up the crew of the Danish steamer *Viking,* which a submarine had destroyed by gun-fire in the *Wandilla's** presence; in February she rescued the seven survivors (out of 1,100) of an Italian troopship, the *Minas,* torpedoed two days before; and in May, 1918, she was held up in the Mediterranean by an enemy submarine, and thoroughly examined, but was so unmistakably a hospital ship that she was allowed to proceed.

The *Warilda** also had several narrow escapes before she was finally sunk. In November, 1916, when on duty in the Ægean Sea, she passed through the Zea Channel just before the *Britannic* was mined there (about 11 a.m. on the 21st), and a few days later through the Mykone Channel just before the *Braemar Castle* was torpedoed (on the morning of the 24th). On each occasion the *Warilda** made the passage at night. When allotted to the Havre-Southampton run at the beginning of 1917, being in an area in which all ships—according to the enemy's warning—would be liable to attack, she had to be camouflaged and armed with a 4.5-inch gun (being then known as an "ambulance transport"), and in February, 1918, was torpedoed, though luckily the torpedo failed to explode. Her sinking in August is narrated in Appendix No. 6.

VII

All this voyaging was not done without an immense amount of dockyard labour in Australia. The naval establishments in the Commonwealth (whose work may here be considered as a whole) were centred mainly in Sydney and Melbourne, the former being the principal naval base, but headquarters being at the Navy Office in Melbourne.[44] The chief establishments were:—

At Sydney:

Cockatoo Island Dockyard. This yard, which in 1913 had been taken over from the State of New South Wales by the Commonwealth Government, was

[44] The permanent head of the civil staff at the Navy Department was the naval secretary, Hon. Paymaster-Commander G. L. Macandie (of East Kew, Vic.).

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the principal docking centre in Australasia and the only yard for the construction of warships. Here during the war three destroyers (the *Huon, Torrens,* and *Swan*) and a light cruiser (the *Brisbane*) were completed; that term includes the local manufacture of the boilers and main machinery (except the *Brisbane's* turbines) and of part of the electrical fittings. Another light cruiser, the *Adelaide,* was laid down in November, 1917, and launched in July, 1918.[45] The island dock was used by eleven Australian warships, two British auxiliary cruisers, and three Japanese cruisers. By November, 1918, fifty transports and two hospital ships had been fitted or refitted, many of them being dealt with four or five times; the *Wiltshire* had eight refits before being dismantled.

Garden Island, formerly the Admiralty's naval yard in Australia, but taken over by the Commonwealth Government before the war. It comprised repair shops for refitting ships, a naval store dépôt, a sub-dépôt for torpedo-gear and gun-mountings, and a dépôt-ship (H.M.A.S. *Penguin*) for naval officers and men. Here forty-two transports and the hospital ship *Grantala** were fitted out, and sixty-seven refits were carried through. Garden Island, having no dock, could undertake no new construction, but repairs were evenly apportioned between this yard and Cockatoo; the pressure of work being considerable, both were kept fully employed, and the friction which occurred after the war was entirely absent. At Garden Island all the smaller warships were refitted and repaired when necessary (the *Parramatta* was overhauled five times, and the *Encounter* six); the captured *Komet* was converted into H.M.A.S. *Una,* and several dépôt and patrol ships were fitted out, besides six mine-sweepers and three small vessels for the military administration at Rabaul. The main responsibility for the supply of naval stores and fittings in Australasian waters rested

[45] Particulars of ships built or building for the Australian Navy during the war are given in *Appendix No. 4.*

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upon this yard, and at the outbreak of war the most urgent needs were at once met from its reserve stocks. A store-ship, the *Aorangi*, was commissioned there to follow the fleet with stores and gear, and arrangements were made for the expansion of supply. In spite of the policy (followed both by the Admiralty and the Australian Naval Board) of buying stores locally whenever possible, it was found necessary to obtain most of the special naval stores from Great Britain. This, however, became at times impossible, and during these periods local manufacturers, especially of wireless equipment, rose to the occasion and maintained the supply of at least the most urgent needs.[46] Besides furnishing stores for all warships and auxiliaries constructed or converted in Sydney, the yard supplied certain cruisers of the Japanese Navy and the ex-German ships used as cargo-carriers and transports; it also sent shipments to outposts and stations in various parts of Australia and the Pacific.

Royal Edward Victualling Yard. The Victualling Store Officer not only undertook the purchase and provision of food, mess gear, clothing, and certain other material for all Australian naval services, hospital ships, and Commonwealth liners, and of bedding and other supplies for certain transports, but, from July, 1917, onwards, was responsible for the supply of provisions for the British squadrons in the Cape, East Indies, and China waters.

The Naval Armament Dépôt—charged with the supply of guns and ammunition.

At Melbourne:

The Naval Dépôt at Williamstown, comprising a training dépôt for naval officers and ratings, small repair shops, and a naval store dépôt. At this yard a number of merchant ships were fitted with 4.7-inch or 6-pounder guns, and certain repairs and alterations

[46] The provision of wireless equipment in these emergencies is referred to in more detail on *pp. 442-3.*

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were effected. The *Pioneer* and *Protector* were equipped with stores and fittings, and, until the opening of the special store at Port Melbourne, blankets and hammocks were supplied to transports. Mine-sweeping gear and wireless apparatus were also supplied to a number of ships and stations. Through the training dépôt there passed practically all officers and men recruited for the Australian Navy, except those entering through the Naval College and the training ship *Tingira*. Former officers of the British Navy, reservists, young medical or engineer graduates from the Australian universities, were put through short tests or courses of varying lengths before distribution to their various posts; 202 officers and 1,295 men went through the gunnery school.

The Victorian Government dockyard adjoined this establishment, and during the war was closely associated with it.

Port Melbourne Naval Store. This was a subsidiary establishment specially instituted in 1915 for the provision of repair stores and fittings for part of the transport fleet.[47]

VIII

Another of the Naval Board's activities, though not itself strictly naval in quality, must be mentioned here. Besides its seventy-four transports it operated a fleet of cargo-vessels—twelve ex-enemy steamers—with the object of regularising as far as possible the export of food-stuffs to Europe and the import of necessaries to Australia. As the transport fleet included most of the vessels (other than mail-steamers) that had hitherto carried refrigerated meat, &c., to England, the traffic in meat became mainly the business of the Board; soon the exports of wheat, wool, and metals were also lifted by Board-controlled vessels, and receipts from this source were

[47] The numbers employed at the chief establishments are stated to have been roughly as follows:—Cockatoo Island, about 2,700; Garden Island, about 950; Royal Edward Victualling Yard, several hundreds; Williamstown Naval Yard, about 950.

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used to meet in part the expense of transporting troops. The following table shows the quantities of meat, etc., thus carried and the freights earned year by year:—

Year.	Cargo in Freight-tons.						Freight.
	Wheat.	Wool.	Meat.	Metals.	Other.[48]	Total.	
							£
1914 ..	1,335	37,977	37,349	20,861	32,650	130,172	411,343
1915 ..	22,879	124,921	84,764	155,799	71,737	460,100	1,623,750
1916 ..	392,350	100,273	66,881	111,845	100,361	771,710	3,913,154
1917 ..	78,155	173,958	61,599	70,866	78,316	462,894	2,702,159
1918 (three months only)	5,262	21,609	681	4,138	6,382	38,072	300,977
	499,981	458,738	251,274	363,509	289,446	1,862,948	8,951,383

After March, 1918, this traffic was carried on by the Commonwealth Government Line, to which were transferred the twelve cargo-steamers and six of the transports.

One awkward result of using ex-enemy vessels must be noticed. To make this use internationally legal each vessel was permanently requisitioned and placed on the British register, thus satisfying the provisions of Article 2 of The Hague Convention of 1907, which had been agreed to by Germany. But instructions were repeatedly issued from Berlin to German consuls in neutral ports, ordering them to use every means of seizing or harassing the requisitioned vessels, and more than once the Board was warned by the British Government against allowing a cargo steamer to visit ports where German influence was strong. Further, the Governments of the United States (before it took part in the war) and of Holland were extremely punctilious in observing a strict neutrality, and ex-German vessels operated by the British or the Australian Government were not favoured in ports of the United States or the Dutch Indies. Thus the *Conargo** (ex-enemy *Altona*) was refused the use of a Government dock at New Orleans on the ground that she flew the flag of a belligerent nation; the *Boonah** (ex-enemy *Melbourne*) had great difficulty in clearing the port of New

[48] This included butter, fruit, tallow, and skins, etc.

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York because she had been used as a transport on the voyage to Europe, though at the time of her visit she was merely carrying cargo to Australia; and the Board's cargo steamers were unable to trade with ports in the Dutch Indies because the local authorities refused even bunker-coal to a prize vessel in the employ of the British Government.

IX

An important section of the Naval Board's transport machinery was the Transport Branch, established in London in January, 1915. Many of the requisitioned vessels belonged to British firms, and many of them were (as has already been mentioned) used by the Admiralty for purposes not peculiarly Australian; it became, therefore, advisable to have at the centre of the Empire representatives of the Board who could conduct negotiations and adjust a mass of claims (both for and against the Board) without the long delays that must have been caused by perpetual reference to Australia. A single paragraph from the first annual report of the Branch will sufficiently illustrate its usefulness:

> "The military operations in the Dardanelles, and subsequently in Serbia, have necessitated the frequent use of Australian transports for Imperial service, as in an emergency the Admiralty's need for ships becomes absolutely imperative. When reinforcements are urgently required or a new expedition is launched at short notice, all considerations beyond the military necessities of the moment must be disregarded, and any and all ships within reach have to be requisitioned. At such times the Commonwealth transport service suffers, unexpected delays result, and prearranged plans are seriously disorganised. It has been the practice of this Branch to maintain the closest touch with the Admiralty throughout, and, without raising obstacles to the Imperial employment of Australian transports where urgent requirements arise, or where material deviation and detention are not involved, to keep prominently before the Admiralty officials the full importance of Australian requirements in respect of the carriage of troops and maintenance of trade. The Admiralty system of decentralisation, under

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> which responsibility is so largely delegated to the man on the spot, renders it at times very difficult to keep in close touch with the movements of transports in Egyptian waters and in the Ægean Sea. The recent appointment of an Australian naval officer to the staff of the Principal Transport Officer in Egypt should be of the greatest assistance."

The Branch was placed under the superintendence of H. B. G. Larkin, with the Director of Navy Accounts (Fleet Paymaster Martin[49]) as his right-hand man. When Australian troops were sent to France and a branch of A.I.F. Headquarters was established in London, the Transport Branch at once co-operated with the military authorities, and permanent Port Embarkation Staffs were created to deal both with the landing of troops and with the handling of military cargoes in London. When in 1917 the Australian transports were transferred to direct Imperial control, the work of the Branch changed character; its main duties thenceforth were to secure from the Ministry of Shipping accommodation both for reinforcements proceeding from the Commonwealth and for invalids and wounded men who must be returned to the Commonwealth—and these, after the heavy casualty lists which began with the Battle of the Somme in 1916, overflowed the British hospitals and demanded for their relief every berth the Branch could secure. The introduction of the convoy system, moreover, automatically eliminated from the transport service a number of slow vessels, and those which were left, while usually sufficient for the accommodation of reinforcements, were subject to

> conflicting demands for space for Imperial reinforcements, for returning labour battalions, and for Australian invalids.

Consequently by the end of 1917 there were still in England nearly 5,000 Australian sick and wounded who should have been on their way home.

From its inception to the end of 1918 the Branch handled, on transport account, an expenditure of nearly nineteen millions sterling, and receipts totalling nine millions—the freight earned upon cargo carried in transports. These figures

[49] Paymaster-Capt. A. Martin, O.B.E.; R.A.N. Of Melbourne; b. England, 16 March, 1871. Died 22 Sept., 1930.

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do not include the accounts relating to cargo steamers employed as such by the Commonwealth—an expenditure of two millions and receipts of over four—which also came under the control of the Branch. These large trading operations, as well as those involved in the transport of troops, were brought to account in the Navy Office, the supervision of this task—a most unusual one for such a department—falling almost entirely on the Acting Director of Navy Accounts.[50]

[50] R. Abercrombie, Esq. Director of Navy Accounts since 1919; of Hawthorn, Vic.; b. Mount Duneed, Vic., 19 July, 1881.

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CHAPTER XIV

SUNDRY SERVICES: RADIO-TELEGRAPHY, CENSORSHIP, COALING, ETC.

RADIO-TELEGRAPHY was formally initiated in the Commonwealth by a conference held at Melbourne in December, 1909, at which were present representatives of New Zealand, Fiji, several Commonwealth departments, the Australian army, and the Australian Squadron of the Imperial Navy. Among the resolutions passed by this conference one recommended that high-powered stations should be erected near Sydney in Australia, Doubtless Bay in New Zealand, and Suva in Fiji, besides less powerful stations at Ocean Island, Tulagi in the Solomons, and Vila in the New Hebrides. All the stations should be under Government control, those in the islands of the western Pacific being managed by the High Commissioner at Fiji. A proviso declared that

> it is understood that the installations of Sydney and Doubtless Bay will only be used for communicating with ships, and for defence purposes.

The Commonwealth Post Office had, however, already been considering a proposal made by the German Telefunken Company to erect stations at Sydney and Fremantle, and had gone so far as to accept its tenders and to ask the advice of the Defence Department about sites. The report of the conference, therefore, instead of hastening the introduction of a wireless system, delayed it by making the whole scheme Imperial, blocking the Telefunken proposals, and necessitating negotiations with other governments.

The destroyers *Parramatta* and *Yarra,* which reached Australia in December of 1910, were fitted with Marconi installations, and a third was purchased for the *Warrego;* the *Australia, Melbourne,* and *Sydney* were also supplied with these installations before leaving England. The ships of the Australian Squadron could thus communicate with each other, but not with land stations, since none existed. Admiral Henderson's Report laid great stress on the urgent need of stations, and included a scheme for their organisation. But the Post Office maintained its right to sole control of the

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business, and refused to do anything until the arrival of an expert whom it had engaged. When this expert, John Graeme Balsillie, reached Melbourne, work was hurriedly begun on several stations without either the naval or the military authorities being consulted. The Colonial Office in August, 1912, suggested that the Commonwealth Government should give due weight to "considerations of defence" when choosing station-sites, but the Post Office insisted that "the matter of the facility of defence of the stations"—which was quite a different affair—was being duly considered, and matters went on as before. Meanwhile, in 1911 the Naval Board had on its own account erected a station at Williamstown for instruction, and one at the Navy Office for communication with the ships of the squadron. Attempts to plant stations at Thursday Island and at Port Moresby in New Guinea, for defence purposes only, were blocked by trouble with the Marconi Company, which considered that its rights were being infringed (the naval stations, afloat and ashore, were covered by a special payment made to the company).

In April, 1913, the Prime Minister (Andrew Fisher) having not long before given definite instructions that the departments concerned should co-operate in wireless matters, a conference was held between representatives of the Navy (Captain Hughes-Onslow,[1] the Second Naval Member, and Lieutenant Cresswell,[2] the naval radio-telegraphic expert), the Army (Major White[3]), and the Post Office (J. G. Balsillie). The immediate question before this conference, which was taken as typical of the problem, was the site of a high-powered station to be erected near Port Darwin. The Council of Defence, which represented both naval and military authorities, had insisted that this station should be at least fifty miles inland, whereas, in spite of the Council's insistence, the postal authorities had chosen a site—admittedly better suited for commercial purposes—only ten miles from the

[1] Rear-Admiral C. H. Hughes-Onslow; R.N. Second Naval Member, Australian Naval Board, 1912/13.

[2] Electrical-Commr. F. G. Cresswell; R.A.N. Of Frankston, Vic.; b. Camberwell, Vic., 12 April, 1880.

[3] Lieut.-Gen. Sir C. B. B. White, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., K.C.V.O., D.S.O., p.s.c. Chief of Staff, 1st Aust. Div., 1914/15; I Anzac (later Aust.) Corps, 1915/18; Fifth British Army, 1918. Officer of Aust. Permanent Forces; of Toorak, Vic.; b. St. Arnaud, Vic., 23 Sept., 1876.

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coast.[4] To anyone now reading the record of these negotiations it seems clear that the Post Office could not then bring itself to believe that war was possible, and therefore discarded war risks from its calculations. The conference, however, combating this insensibility to danger, decided that (*a*) the Darwin site should be reconsidered, (*b*) in the selection of all future sites the opinion of the Defence Department should be taken, and in the event of disagreement the Council of Defence should have the final word.

The outbreak of war found Australia with no really high-powered wireless stations, those at Perth, Sydney, and Melbourne being but medium-powered and far behind modern naval requirements. Messages had consequently to be relayed through a series of low-powered coastal stations at Brisbane, Townsville, Cooktown, Thursday Island, and Port Moresby—a condition that gravely hampered the Australian fleet. In the Defence Department itself (which then included the Navy Office) it was clearly understood that in wireless matters naval interests were predominant, since no other means existed of maintaining communication with warships at sea. As soon, therefore, as war was seen to be imminent, all wireless stations in the Commonwealth were by an Order-in-Council of the 3rd of August placed under the control of the Naval Board, and a wireless censorship was established at 11 p.m. on that day. The naval administration devoted its interest mainly to two points—strict censorship, and the interception of enemy messages—but it attended also to the installation (when necessary) and inspection of all apparatus in merchant-vessels, especially in those used as transports, to the manufacture of plant and equipment required for warships, etc., and to the

[4] The point at issue was important. The Post Office on March 20 announced that "industrial considerations will take precedence over others in the selection of the site at Port Darwin," and suggested that, if the Defence Department wanted a safer station, it had better erect one for its own use. The Defence authorities replied:—

> "The Department of Defence adopts the strongest attitude that this station was primarily established for Imperial and defence purposes, notably in regard to the operations of the Fleet in time of war,"

and added—

> "Any station erected at Darwin or elsewhere which has an important strategical aspect Imperially should be so safeguarded militarily that in time of war it should be absolutely trustworthy; in our opinion the present selection imposes military difficulties so hard to surmount that it cannot be said that a station erected on the proposed site will at all times be completely trustworthy."

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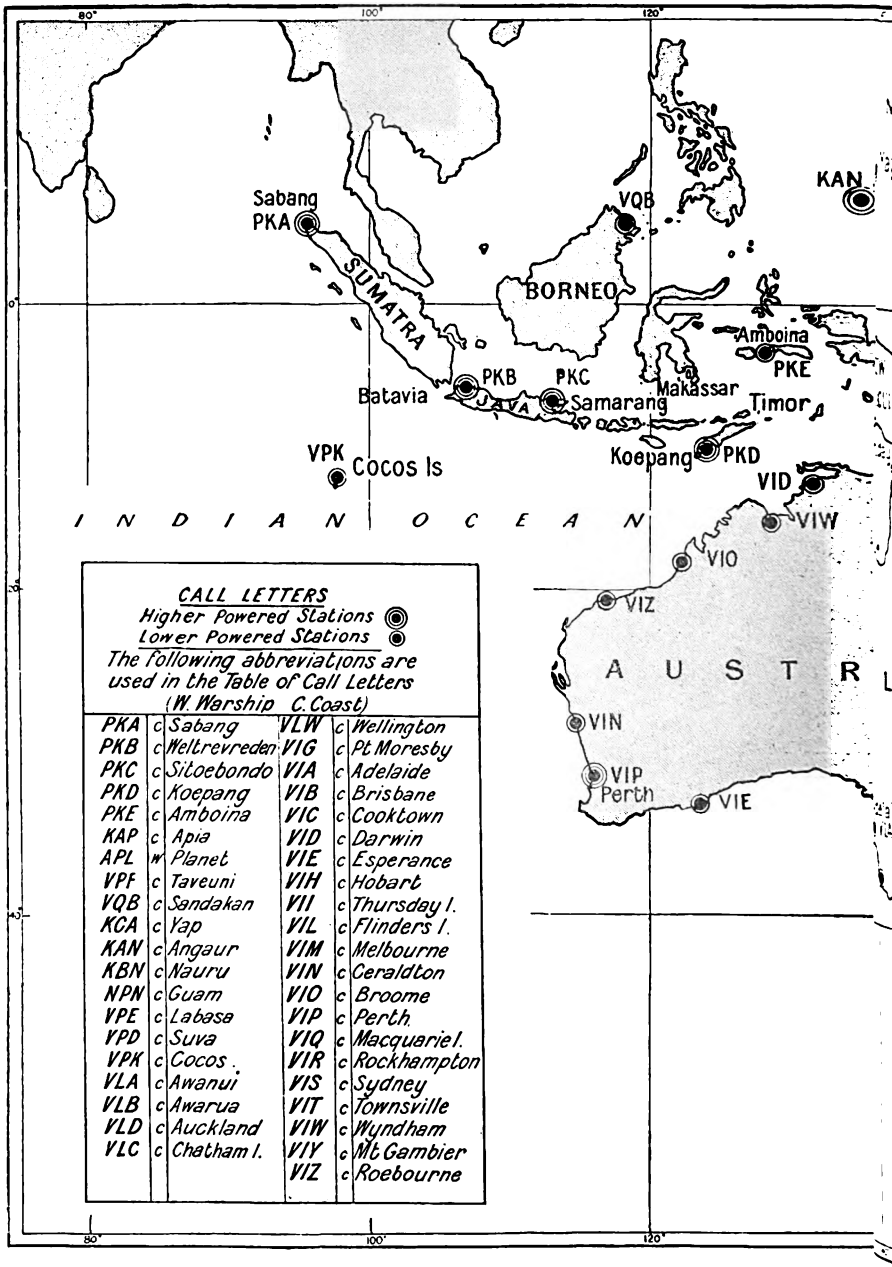
MAP



AUSTRALIA AND THE ISLANDS, SHOWI

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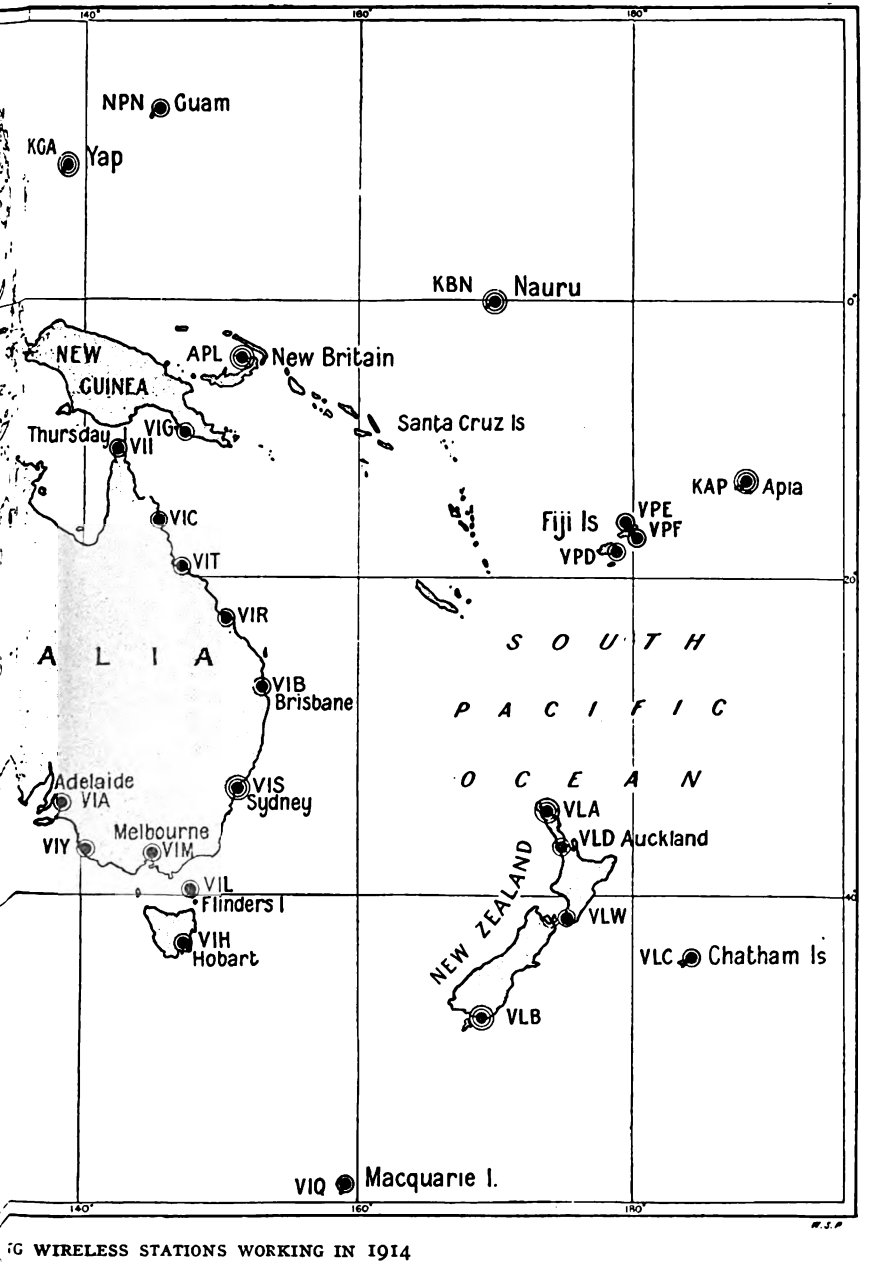

G WIRELESS STATIONS WORKING IN 1914

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investigation of reports—very numerous in the early months of the war—concerning illicit wireless installations. Of all these tasks the most important and most widely useful was the interception of outside messages. In 1914 it was, of course, messages from the enemy squadron in the Pacific that were most eagerly listened for, and in previous chapters many instances have been given of the value[6] attached to their interception, and of the lack of information which resulted from their loss when the station at Yap was destroyed.[6] When Yap was silenced, the Darwin station was still able occasionally to pick up Angaur and Nauru, and the capture of one of the German secret codes[7] enabled the Commonwealth authorities to provide London with intercepted information of exceptional value, since the Germans—as was long afterwards proved by the notorious Zimmermann telegram[8]—never suspected that their cyphers had been discovered, and therefore transmitted by wireless all over the world all manner of confidential news about their movements and their diplomatic efforts.

When von Spee's squadron had finally left the Pacific, and the other German warships had been interned, captured, or destroyed, Australian wireless stations became engaged in intercepting German messages passing through neutral stations. They thence obtained a good deal of useful information concerning the enemy merchant vessels that were sheltering in ports of the Dutch Indies. At one time it was noted that several of them were coaling as if to emerge from their shelter, and the necessary precautions were taken to let them know that they were being watched; while no one wanted to capture them, no one desired to have a possible raider let loose in the Archipelago. Another intercepted message gave details of an infernal machine—or apparatus that might serve as such—but the unavoidable breaks and mistakes in

[5] In one particular too much importance was at first attached to them. Attempts at directional estimates—then in their infancy—were remarkably successful in discovering the bearing of the ship whose signals were being picked up, but they went much astray when distances were in question. On *pp. 5 and 9-10* instances are mentioned, but the distance given was 500 to 1,000 miles out, though the bearings were approximately correct.

[6] *See p. 18.*

[7] *See p. 46.*

[8] Cf. *Life and Letters of Walter H. Page, Second Series* (*pp. 346-7* of Australian edition).

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the interception (which, it must be remembered, was effected by operators quite ignorant of the language used in the messages) made this piece of information useless for practical purposes. It is obviously impossible to give many details of the results of this branch of the radio-telegraphists' work; its great value to the naval intelligence service cannot be over-estimated, but must here be taken for granted.

Of less value for intelligence, but of great temporary interest, were the messages intercepted from long-distance stations in Europe and America. Nauen,[9] the German publicity station, was a persistent contributor, often devoting itself to Australian propaganda. The following is an example:

> How exceedingly heavy war demands bear upon Australia is shown by message which General Monash, commander-in-chief of Australian forces, has sent home that several brave Australian battalions have ceased to exist as fighting units. . . . Eight per cent. of Australian population has been already under arms; of these 49,000 are killed and 133,000 wounded. Reinforcements are to be now so regulated that every three months volunteers who are mustered in are to be chosen by lot.[10]

But perhaps the most notable of the messages intercepted from European stations was caught by a minor receiving station on the roof of the Navy Office in Melbourne on the morning of the 15th of November, 1918:—

> General Pétain has addressed the following order of the day to the troops under his command:—"To the French armies of long months of fighting. History will praise the tenacity and proud energy displayed during these four years by our country, which had to conquer that she might not perish. To-day, in order to make peace secure, you are to march towards the Rhine—the Rhine in the land of Alsace-Lorraine. Alsace-Lorraine, which is so dear to you, you shall enter as liberators. . . . After defeating your enemy in arms, you will impress him with the dignity of your behaviour, and the world will observe what it ought most to admire—your bearing in success as well as your heroic devotion in battle.

A controversy was then in progress as to the reception of long-distance messages by the smaller Australian stations, and permission was sought to hand this message to the Melbourne evening newspapers, both as interesting news

[9] In October, 1918, Perth was intercepting Nauen at the average rate of 1,100 words a day. This was done by means of a directional aerial, consisting of two parallel wires approximately 100 feet apart; the wires were carried for 1,000 feet on counterpoised poles, and then on trees south-easterly into the bush, the total length of the roof portion (*i.e.*, of the wire supported by insulators at the top of the poles) being approximately 3,000 feet.

[10] Needless to say, the last sentence was news to Australians.

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received in advance of the cablegrams and also to prove the capacity of the naval radio stations. But it is difficult to hurry official routine, and the requisite permission was not granted till two days later, when the cabled news had long since been spread broadcast over the Commonwealth.

A minor episode in the work of interception was provided by the United States. From February, 1918, onwards the high-powered station at Honolulu was distributing a general news service of an official character, and the Consul-General for the United States asked that Australian stations should pick up this news for transmission to the Australian press. It was agreed that these messages, after passing the naval censorship (since Australian rules differed in several points from those of the United States), should be handed to the Consul-General, who could do what he liked with them. The Sydney station—the most important in the Commonwealth—being otherwise occupied, it was arranged to use the Melbourne station for interception and to hand the messages to the consul at Melbourne. In July, however, the Consul-General, who was established in Sydney, forwarded a request from the authorities at Washington that the Sydney station should be used, and the messages sent direct to him. He added his own request for Australian co-operation "in order that the instructions of the Department of State may be complied with," and in a letter to the Acting Prime Minister used the phrase: "If you will kindly take the proper steps to have the Secretary of State's instructions complied with." In a later letter he suggested that both Sydney and Melbourne should be taken off other work to intercept the Honolulu messages:—

> It is not the intention of the Government to withdraw the messages from Melbourne, but the messages should be intercepted at Sydney as well as Melbourne.

So eager was the Commonwealth Government to show courtesy towards the United States that the unusual form of these requests—for which, of course, the Consul-General himself, and not his Government, was responsible—was ignored; and, in spite of strong protests from the officials responsible for Australian radio work, the Sydney station was assigned to intercepting Honolulu from the 8th of August

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onwards. On the 22nd the Consul-General complained that the messages intercepted at Sydney reached him later than they had done under the earlier arrangement. The reasons for this had, however, been fully explained to him before the change had been made. It must be noted, as a matter of technical interest, that, while Sydney could easily, and Melbourne with some difficulty, receive from Honolulu, neither could transmit so far, or even to the United States station at Cavite in the Philippines. When, therefore, the British and United States naval authorities in Chinese and Malaysian waters suggested that radio communication should be maintained between Cavite and Australian Stations, it was found necessary to use the round-about route *viâ* Townsville, Bitapaka, and Guam. Bitapaka itself, it may be noted, was in 1918 capable of intercepting Nauen, Honolulu, San Francisco, and Doubtless Bay, as well as occasional signals from Aden, Amsterdam, Auckland, Bombay, Hong Kong, the Mauritius, Petropaulovsk in Kamchatka, Rangoon, and Singapore. The Japanese station at Funabashi was heard so well that it frequently "jammed" the Bitapaka transmission.

Of the other branches of radio work only short mention need be made. The investigation of reports concerning illicit installations after a time became a function of the military intelligence service. The only one of special interest was that of a supposed installation in the bush near Sale in Gippsland—which turned out to be the abandoned plant of a sparrow-trapping establishment.[11] The manufacture of wireless equipment for warships, transports, shore stations, etc., proved to be a task of exacting importance. During a great part of the war the export of wireless gear from Great Britain to Australia was necessarily suspended, and the Australian authorities were forced to rely entirely upon local factories for the provision of these delicate instruments. The Williamstown workshops, established in 1912, proved inadequate, but the gap was very satisfactorily filled by Father Shaw's wireless telegraphy workshops at Randwick near Sydney. The value of this service on the part of an institution which was already involved in great financial

[11] The subject of inquiries into real and supposed enemy activities in Australia is dealt with more fully in *Vol. XI.*

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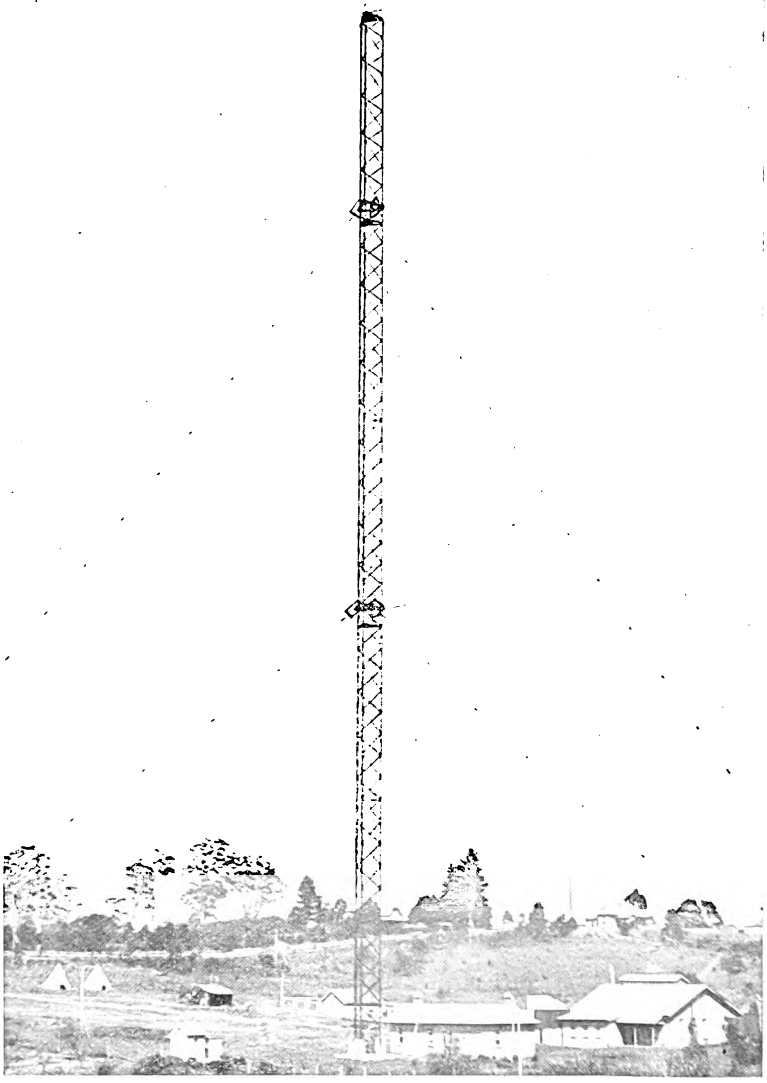

THE WIRELESS STATION AT PENNANT HILLS, NEW SOUTH WALES

Lent by Electrical-Commr. F. G. Cresswell, R.A.N.

To face p. 412.

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COALING H.M.A.S. *Brisbane* AT FREMANTLE, JUNE 1917

Lent by Bandmaster R. D. Patton, R.A.N.
Aust. War Memorial Collection No. A96.

To face p. 443.

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difficulties can hardly be exaggerated; the number of ships and lives saved by its means will never be known. After much negotiation—the conduct of which by the then Minister was afterwards very gravely questioned[12] and resulted in his departure from office—the Naval Board in August, 1916, took over Father Shaw's workshops, utilising them not only for the manufacture and repair of wireless apparatus and machinery, but for making, for other Commonwealth departments, dynamo-electric machinery, electrical apparatus, etc., of which supplies were then almost unobtainable. Installations were manufactured for the three later destroyers (H.M.A.S's *Huon, Torrens,* and *Swan*), for the *Fantome, Coogee, Sleuth, Mourilyan,* and nine transports, for the collier *Kanna,* and for many smaller craft used as examining and patrolling vessels by the Naval Brigade; fifteen "harbour-defence" sets were made for the Examination Service; three sets were sent to the Indian Government for their mine-sweepers; the Commonwealth's Defence Department was supplied with six military "pack" sets; the radio stations at Woodlark Island and Samarai in New Guinea were completely fitted out; and twenty-four transports and three cargo vessels of the Government line were given long-wave receivers specially designed for the reception of war-warnings transmitted from Admiralty stations. Twelve 5-kilowatt arc continuous wave transmitters were designed and manufactured; arc sets were installed at Perth, Sydney (two), Townsville, and Rabaul, the transmitting range of these stations being thereby increased. The difficulties of manufacture were greatly increased by the fact that no drawings or other detailed specifications for the construction of these sets were available in Australia at the time. Among the new designs were a transmitting oscillator (of the two-coil type, permitting a quick change in transmission of wave-lengths from 300 up to 2,500 metres) for shore stations, and a new type of aerial tuning coil. Much miscellaneous work was also done for the Government dockyards, and for repairs on Lewis guns, rifles, range-finders, etc., for the Defence Department.

[12] This transaction, which, quite extraneous to the Royal Australian Navy, was fully investigated by a Royal Commission, and in which no officer or civil servant came under any shadow of blame, is dealt with in *Vol. XI.* Unfortunately the incident obscured the excellent achievement of these works.

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II

The censorship established during the war under control of the Naval Board operated in two quite distinct spheres —perhaps, rather, in three, though the third was extremely limited in comparison with the other two. From December, 1914, naval censors acted (*a*) in conjunction with the military censors[13] as their advisers on all questions of naval interest; (*b*) as super-censors of letters reaching Australia from the ships of the Australian Squadron, to ensure that the censorship exercised in each of these ships was effective and uniform; (*c*) as first and final censors for letters from the smaller vessels engaged in coastal patrols, whose few officers were fully occupied with other duties.

In the early months of the war all forms of censorship were controlled by the military authorities, who did their best to conform to naval requirements. But, as in Great Britain, the censors could not render it certain that no undesirable news would be printed, and, in spite of their efforts, naval matter of a dangerous character was repeatedly allowed to appear in the press. Thus in August, 1914, an important Melbourne newspaper inadvertently gave information concerning the position of ships which would have been of great value to the enemy; in October the press published such full details—including pictures—of the departure of the First Convoy of the A.I.F. that it became necessary to hold up all newspaper mails for several weeks; in November, again, movements of transports were published, and great risk was thereby incurred. As soon as the mistakes had been committed, the censors were on their guard to prevent repetition. But news once released cannot be recalled.

Consequently in December it was decided to establish a naval censorship directly under the Board's control. An officer appointed by the Board was to advise the Deputy Chief Censor on all matters affecting shipping, and all messages or articles of such a character were to be referred to him. Official messages despatched from London were almost without exception released automatically.[14] All other messages were considered in the light of definite instructions received from

[13] The work of the military censors is dealt with in *Vol. XI.*

[14] One that was not so released is dealt with on *pp. 451-2.*

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the Admiralty or the Board, and, if released by the Naval Censor, passed into the hands of his military colleagues to be dealt with as they saw fit.

This system undoubtedly tended to create friction between the naval and military censors. The power of the naval censor was purely one of veto; what he held was held, but what he passed was not necessarily released. As, however, his advice was given only to the Deputy Chief Censor or his subordinates, and the press knew of it only through their action, any dissatisfaction with his decisions was visited on the military censors, who, not always understanding his reasons, naturally chafed at having to bear the blame.

The basis of naval censorship is expressed in a platitude —information that may be useful to the enemy should not be published. But, to make this statement clearly intelligible, it must be expanded and qualified.

A. It was useful to the enemy that the Australian public should be unnecessarily and wrongfully alarmed. Censorship was therefore properly applied to prevent the publication of false statements or rumours calculated to cause such alarm.

B. It was useful to the enemy that plots to damage Australian vessels or to harm the Commonwealth in other ways should be successful, and that such plotters should go undiscovered. In order to discover these plotters, or to defeat their plans by keeping back certain information from the public for a time, censorship was properly applied.

C. While the purpose of censorship is to preserve absolute secrecy about dangerous matter, it was recognised that such secrecy could rarely, if ever, be maintained. If the enemy chooses to take great trouble and spend much money, it is likely that he will in the end get what information he wants. One aim of the censorship was to put him to great trouble, for every extra effort demanded of the spy increases his own risk of being discovered. However easy it might seem for him to ascertain a fact, it was the censorship's business to

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minimise the easiness. In this connection the following extract from the censorship rules of the United States is valuable:

> "Papers published in ports should with especial care refrain from giving information to enemy agents in regard to ships stationed or calling at such ports. Because dangerous news is known locally, it does not follow that it can be safely published. Non-publication of dangerous news obliges the enemy to rely on spies actually in the localities concerned, thus adding difficulties and delay in its transmission."

D. Censorship is in its essence an interference with the normal course of business; it was therefore desirable, especially in matters of naval interest (which include oversea trade), to interfere as little as possible in consistence with the public safety. This leads in practice to a good deal of compromise between the needs of trade and the danger of giving information to the enemy. On the extent of compromises opinions may easily differ; but the Naval Board, which had information not open to the public or to private persons concerned in the trade, was necessarily the sole judge of the extent to which such a compromise might be effected.

On the basis thus laid down and explained, the Naval Board conducted its control of naval censorship in the Commonwealth. It must be remembered, however, that in the actual working two separate authorities came into play. (1) The Imperial Government, acting on the advice of the Admiralty, every now and then issued, concerning naval censorship, important general orders, which the Commonwealth authorities naturally adopted. It then became the Board's duty to enforce these orders without question; there was no local discretion in the matter. For instance, the order forbidding mention in the press of the movements of any shipping whatever in the Pacific Ocean was of this kind. The order forbidding mention of the names of British ships sunk by the enemy also emanated from the Admiralty, and the only allowable exceptions were those in which the Admiralty itself,

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for its own reasons, made the disclosure. (2) In other matters (chiefly concerned with the movements and mishaps of vessels on or near the Australian coast, especially of transports reaching or leaving Australia) the Board used its own discretion, basing its action on the principles stated above. The chief difficulties in this connection arose when—information which should not have been published having been irregularly disclosed to persons not entitled to receive it—the press argued that, since it was already known outside official circles, there could be no harm in its publication. The attitude of the Naval Board, however, was rightly that dangerous knowledge, even when disseminated beyond the proper limits, should be restricted to as few people as possible, improper publication being no excuse for still further publication.[15]

Apart from Admiralty instructions the Naval Board had responsibilities of its own. There were periods in 1917-18 when it had charge of all the oceans south of the equator between the east coast of Africa and the west coast of South America. That statement necessarily carries with it the implication that very few warships were within the area mentioned; but on such important trade-routes as were included in the Board's domain the lack of warships merely increased the necessity for a strict censorship. For it must not be forgotten that throughout the war a large number of German merchant-vessels were sheltering in neutral ports all over Malaysia;[16] in common talk they were spoken of as "interned," but actually they were at liberty to leave port whenever they liked. The example of the *Cormoran*[17] shows how easy it would have been to fit them out as raiders despite the unquestioned vigilance of the neutral governments, and the career of the *Wolf*[18] proves the damage which could be done in those unsentinelled seas by even a single raider. Quite apart from her mine-laying exploits the *Wolf* could, with a little more information, have been nearly as dangerous as the *Emden*.

[15] Similarly it was often argued by impatient pressman that news that had been published in United States newspapers should not be kept out of those of Australia. But news may be harmless though known to millions of Germans in America, yet dangerous if known to a single German off the Australian coast.

[16] *See map at p. 208.* [17] *See pp. 37-41.* [18] *See pp. 342-52.*

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The career of her contemporary, the *Seeadler,*[19] on the other hand, illustrates very clearly the value of the censorship. In the Atlantic this vessel captured more than a dozen large merchantmen. The position of her successive captures indicated that she was making for the Straits of Magellan, and the Naval Board, acting on a presumption that she might enter the Pacific, took its precautions. In May, 1918, it was informed by the Admiralty that the censorship of shipping news in the Pacific might be relaxed, even to the publication of sailing dates; but, receiving almost at the same time reports from trans-Pacific shipping that three lots of wreckage had been sighted (apparently from sailing ships loaded with timber), the Board preferred to play for safety, obtained from the Admiralty leave to maintain the stricter censorship, and thereby both greatly worried the Australian press and shipping agents and also created a certain amount of friction with the military censors. But when the *Seeadler's* career ended shortly afterwards, her sum total of captures in the Pacific comprised only the three small sailing-vessels.

During the greater part of 1915 the naval censorship was exercised through three officers stationed respectively at Melbourne, Sydney, and Brisbane. Before the end of the year experience had shown that this system was clumsy and dilatory. Theoretically it implied speedy decisions—a constant desideratum in all matters connected with the press; but since in practice the Sydney and Brisbane censors, before releasing doubtful messages, felt obliged to consult their colleague in Melbourne (who was in immediate touch with the Naval Board) that delay was inevitable. Consequently in October, 1915, the censorship was concentrated at Melbourne in the hands of a single officer, who could at any moment be called upon for a decision either by the military censor there or by the Deputy Chief Censor; all contingencies that could be foreseen were provided for in advance by rulings, which the Deputy Chief Censor adopted and issued as orders to his subordinates all over Australia, and it was arranged that any matter of naval interest not covered by these rulings should be referred to Melbourne before publication was allowed. Though this system also involved delays, it brought all

[19] *See pp. 364-7.*

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problems at the earliest possible moment within the purview of the responsible naval authorities (of whom the Naval Censor was the mouthpiece), ensured unity of control, and avoided the dangerous and irritating muddle that must have resulted had subordinate censors been allowed to give their varying interpretations of even the simplest and clearest rulings. As it was, one of the gravest difficulties encountered by the Australian censorship arose from the different interpretations put upon Admiralty orders by censors in other countries. A long correspondence with Canada on this subject ended in an agreement that each country should enforce its own rules irrespective of the other. At Calcutta in 1918 messages were passed for transmission to Australia containing information (*e.g.*, of the sailing-dates, routes, and probable arriving-dates of vessels trading between India and Australia) which Admiralty rules, as interpreted in Melbourne, strictly prohibited, and which, as the Australian authorities held, would have been of inestimable value to a raider in the Indian Ocean.

Among other such difficulties—which are mentioned here as a warning to censorship bureaux in future wars—was the isolation of the censorship as a branch of the military and naval administrations, so that other sections of officialdom sometimes failed to understand its importance. Two instances may be cited. On one occasion a long paragraph giving very full information about the Australian Squadron—information which had been carefully deleted from the *Commonwealth Year Book* and similar publications—was prepared as coming from official sources for circulation in the Australian country press. Luckily it was intercepted by a local censor, and was withheld from that form of publication. After long search its source was discovered in a "digest" issued occasionally from the Ministry of Home Affairs, which had not thought to consult the Navy Office before publishing important naval information. Again, instructions were given to all censors to expedite "government" messages (another form of the instruction was "British Government messages"), probably under the impression that such messages would naturally be sent in some code. But early in 1918 the Official Secretary to the Governor-General claimed that messages sent by him

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en clair were also free from censorship; and several of these were passed without reference to the naval authorities, although they contained statements in plain language about the sailing- and arrival-dates of shipping. A little later it was discovered that this privilege was being extended to the Trade Commissioner for Canada, and even to minor officials of the Prime Minister's Department. It is obvious that the transmission of valuable information in plain language is just as dangerous, and just as liable to interception *en route*, whether it is done by private persons or by the highest authorities in the land. Had censorship been dealt with in Australia as it was in Canada—by a committee representing the principal departments of the Government—its importance would have been more widely recognised in those departments and its prestige more satisfactorily established against the repeated attacks of ill-informed outsiders. In Canada, from the middle of 1916 onwards, censorship was administered by a sub-committee of the Executive Council consisting of

The Minister of Justice (chairman and convener),
The Minister of the Naval Service,
The Minister of the Militia and Defence,
The Postmaster-General,
The Secretary of State,
The Solicitor-General.

In this way the whole strength of the Government was behind the censorship staff, and every department had an interest in maintaining its rules.

The real weakness of the Australian system of naval censorship was that the press and the public felt its pressure only through the medium of another department. The Naval Censor, as has been said, was technically an adviser of the Deputy Chief Censor, who was a military official; and naval decisions were conveyed to those concerned by other military officials who knew nothing of naval requirements and little about naval organisation. An indignant journalist in Sydney, deprived of a valuable item of news, found that he had to argue his case with a junior military censor, who probably sympathised with him to the utmost but could only say " The

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Navy has ordered deletion." If the censor was meticulous, he would insist on interpreting naval decisions with almost absurd strictness. Thus, when a regulation forbade mention of the arrival of vessels in Port Jackson, a Sydney censor deleted from a newly-arrived Governor's speech an allusion to "our beautiful harbour" because it showed that he had arrived by sea. On the other hand, censors anxious to live on good terms with the press and to avoid over-harsh interpretations of rules were misled by their ignorance of naval conditions into the evasion of definite instructions. Thus one junior censor passed a forbidden message because in his opinion its facts were "obviously known to the enemy" (how, he did not say), and another justified a breach of instructions on the ground that he had "hitherto interpreted them as applicable only to extreme cases." Further, naval officials themselves occasionally, in centres removed from headquarters, gave the local press information that should not have been given, and an astonished Naval Censor was confronted with "official" statements about a matter that he had been doing his best to keep secret. These are, of course, inevitable accidents of every censorship, and would have created only passing annoyance had the full strength of government authority been behind the administration. But in Australia, where the Navy Office was a newcomer without prestige, and where even the Defence Department was one of the minor branches of the government—since the public was apt to feel that the only important war-departments were those controlled by authorities at the other end of the world—the press did not easily brook restraint exercised by an inaccessible naval official through minor military officials who were often unwillingly imposing that restraint.

Here may be mentioned an incident of the censorship which created some friction at the time. About 2 o'clock in the morning of the 7th of June, 1916, there was received in Melbourne a press cable message which began:—

Official Jellicoe Kitchener and staff in cruiser *Hampshire.*

and went on to say that the ship had been mined or torpedoed west of the Orkneys. This message, sent from London at

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3.10 p.m. on the 6th, had been passed by the censor in London, and the morning newspapers were highly indignant when the naval authorities prohibited its immediate publication. Their reason was that, as translated from "telegraphese" into plain English by the cable editors, it announced the deaths of both Kitchener and Jellicoe; and it seemed unlikely that the news of such an appalling disaster would not be at once given by the British Government to the Governor-General. Ascertaining that no such news had reached Government House, the Naval Board decided to delay publication until the message was confirmed from some other source. When that confirmation arrived, it was at once seen that the message really meant:—

An official report from Jellicoe states that Kitchener . . .

In this form the news was at once released, much too late for the ordinary editions of the morning newspapers; but one of them had prepared for issue a special edition based on the original interpretation of the message, and about midday the Melbourne public was presented with a sheet displaying "KITCHENER AND JELLICOE ON MINED WARSHIP," followed by biographies of the two supposed victims, in which the name of Jellicoe wherever it occurred was roughly blurred out. All this trouble might have been spared had the despatcher at the London end written "Jellicoe official."

Towards the end of 1917 the dissatisfaction of the press with the censorship, and especially with the administration (as far as the papers were concerned) of the naval censorship, became so pronounced that efforts were made by the military authorities to alter the system. As the Navy Office, remembering the mishaps of 1914, was unwilling to reduce its control of the enunciation of a series of instructions which might be differently interpreted by different censors, Senator Pearce decided to hold a conference of newspaper editors and censors at which grievances might be fully aired and some remedy devised.[20] Accordingly on the 16th of April, 1918, twenty editors and six other representatives of Australian newspapers met the Chief of the General Staff, the Deputy

[20] This conference is more fully described in *Vol. XI.*

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Chief Censor, four other military censors, and three representatives of the navy in conference to discuss the following agenda:—

(1) to discuss press censorship problems generally;

(2) to suggest means to obviate any hardships, and to ensure equal treatment of the press;

(3) to suggest means by which censorship duties may be increased and more active co-operation of the press itself obtained;

(4) to take the leaders of the press into the confidence of the Naval and Military Departments, and make them aware of the reasons for certain restrictions which had been imposed;

(5) to discuss further means by which the press can assist in the great task of the Allied Governments.

The naval significance of this conference, which alone concerns us here, may be summed up by saying that, after several cases of alleged harsh treatment of messages by the naval authorities had been mentioned, Captain Thring—who, as Director of the War Staff controlled the naval censorship—explained to the conference the main principles on which the Navy Office acted; whereupon the chairman declared that "the explanation made by Captain Thring of the reasons why the censorship is applied in naval matters was just the explanation we wanted. . . A communication such as has been made to us by Captain Thring shows what strong reason there is for us to accept the directions of the censorship, so that we may be doing our part in saving the Empire from possible danger and catastrophe." From that time to the end of the war the naval censorship was accepted without complaint. On the 16th of November, 1918, the Admiralty allowed the lifting of censorship on all commercial cable messages and on news relating to merchant vessels, but warships and troopships were left under the ban. On the 10th of December, 1918, the Admiralty's press censorship on naval matters and shipping intelligence ended.

The branch of naval censorship which created the least unjustified friction with those who suffered from it was the

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super-censorship of letters from Australian warships. In accordance with naval regulations these letters were censored aboard the ships, usually by the paymaster and the chaplain. The Admiralty order was straightforward enough. Officers —one or more—aboard each ship were appointed by the captain, and all letters—even the captain's own—must be read and censored by the appointed person or persons. The principle behind all this was that, since at any moment after leaving the ship's side a mailbag might fall into enemy hands, a letter must contain nothing that would give the enemy useful information. Postage stamps, for instance, were strictly prohibited, except the Australian, the supply of which soon ran out; the capture of letters bearing West Indian or Straits Settlements stamps might give valuable information as to the whereabouts of a particular ship. Now, if the mail-bag escaped capture—as nearly all did—and reached Australia, the news it contained was by mere lapse of time rendered innocuous. To find out on the 21st of June that early in February the *Sydney* had been cruising off Dutch Guiana would profit nobody. Consequently when the wife of one of the *Sydney's* crew received a letter from which a large number of words had been carefully scissored out (thus probably destroying many harmless sentences written on the other side of the leaf) she complained to her husband—her letters to him being uncensored; and when both writer and recipient discovered that these mutilations had been made in Sydney long after the excised words had ceased to have any importance, complaints from both were loud and frequent. Many such complaints were deliberately made, especially by aggrieved officers, in letters which must pass through the Australian censor's hands, and he had no illusions about his popularity.

This apparently unjustifiable super-censorship, however, in fact justified itself ten times over. In the first place, the Admiralty's order was not for a long time observed aboard Australian ships. On the 11th of February, 1915, the Naval Censor had to report to the Board that many letters received from R.A.N. ships

> contain information concerning not only the past movements of the ships, and their positions when the letters are posted, but also their future movements and the movements of men-of-war belonging to

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our Allies. In one particular case information is given as to the guns mounted in a fortress, and the movements of destroyer patrols besides those of the writer's own and several other ships.

When, following on this report, a regular ships' censorship was established, very few of the supervising officers had the vaguest notion as to the aims of the system they were administering. Many of them thought it a mere nuisance, possibly useful when applied in ships in British waters (since news released in England might be quickly transmitted to Germany) but of no value in ships at a distance. The captain of one Australian ship in the Western Atlantic instructed his censors to let practically any information go through, on the ground that by the time it reached Australia it would be unimportant. Another on another station discovered an Admiralty regulation which said that, as officers' wives must sometimes become aware of their husbands' whereabouts, they should be warned to keep any such information absolutely secret; this he interpreted to mean that an officer could tell his wife anything so long as he warned her not to gossip. Neither to these officers nor to the majority of others did it occur that a letter might go astray in transit. Even late in 1915 practically every letter opened in Melbourne was found to contain information that would have been priceless to a German agent, had he been able to intercept it shortly after it left the ship. The evil was so great and the risks so immediate that nothing less than a sharp lesson could be sufficiently remedial. When an officer (for, to speak plainly, it was almost always an officer who was at fault—the men were far more obedient) received back from his correspondent the remains of a letter looking like a pattern for "drawn-thread" work, he grumbled, protested, was politely virulent, but took care in his next letter not to break the rules. Gradually the writers and the 'board-ship censors submitted to discipline.[21] Whereas in 1915-1916 every letter of a big ship's mail had to be scrutinised, before the end of 1916 matters had so improved that not one letter in a hundred needed the super-censor's scissors. As soon as that

[21] It is also possible that they learned to keep their news-letters until they or their mates went on leave, and to post them ashore. The practice of giving letters to mates to be posted in London was fairly common in the A.I.F., and nothing could prevent a man when on leave from writing as fully as he pleased.

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improvement became evident, the naval censor—who had quite enough other work to do——relaxed his vigilance; in 1917 it became the custom, except for ships newly commissioned or on the appointment of a new and probably inexperienced censor, to pick about a dozen letters at random from the bag, and, if these were satisfactory, to let the rest go. The only trouble came from a commanding officer here and there who claimed—against Admiralty regulations—the privilege of censoring his own letters.

The third form of censorship needs little remark. It was obviously necessary to make sure that no member of a patrol-boat's crew was giving his possibly loose-tongued relatives information about the patrol's work. To the honour of men so employed be it said, scarcely a single letter needed censorship. Sometimes, however, letters from these vessels contained the most startling information though not such as would assist an enemy. One from a seaman aboard a small vessel which never went outside Port Phillip Heads included such an account of a fight between that vessel and three large German raiders in the middle of the Indian Ocean, as "Bartimeus" would have been proud to sign.[22]

[22] To substantiate by instances the need of the super-censorship it may be as well to quote a few passages which had to be eliminated in Melbourne from letters already censored aboard ship. A long extract from one of the ships employed in Malaysia contained references to the other ships of the flotilla, to their arrival at Singapore *viâ* Timor, and to the work they were about to perform off Makassar, Sandakan, and Labuan; these references were roughly smudged over with pencil, but not a letter of them was erased beyond easy recognition. From another ship on similar work came a letter explaining how

> "We are as usual on patrol, four days out then four days in—that is to say, for four days we wander round in circles, so to speak, at the dizzy rate of four knots, occasionally increasing when a ship has to be chased and boarded."

This useful information—had a German agency intercepted the letter *en route*—was let through without protest by the ship's censor. In yet another a full description of a French colonial port was given, including the number and armament of warships in the harbour (this came along as late as February, 1917). Much more rare, it is pleasant to note, were references of this type:—

> "He also is the one that censors the letters. So the other day I asked him if he would mind me sealing mine up and for him to stamp them, so he said 'Most certainly—only too pleased to oblige.'"

To close this note in a pleasanter vein there may be recorded two passages (neither of them deleted) which filled the censor's heart with joy. One, from an officer in the North Atlantic, cheerily announced: "I have just finished my last book; it was by Mother Seigel, and dealt with disorders of the liver and kidneys—most interesting!" The other came from a devoted husband whose habit it was to write to his wife at least four pages on every spare evening, so that, when the mails were to be despatched and had to be censored by an already overdriven officer, this one man's mail might easily run to thirty pages:—"I will not be able to write such long letters, dear, as the censor is complaining about it. The order now is that we are to write post-cards."

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III

At the back of all naval operations in modern times lies the problem of fuel-supply; and in the Pacific Ocean, where sea distances are great and coaling stations few and far between, this problem assumed great importance on the outbreak of war, since it is equally difficult—and equally necessary—to ensure one's own coal-supply and minimise that of the enemy. The history of Australia's marine war-work would therefore be incomplete without a short summary of the measures whereby, in the early months of the war, Patey's ships were given their regular supply of coal and oil and von Spee's ships were as far as possible (unfortunately not very far) deprived of it.[23]

It must be remembered in the first instance that for naval use Australian coal was seriously defective. Comparative experiments carried out with three sorts of coal in July and August of 1914 showed that, to maintain 186 revolutions of the screw, the *Australia* used coal as follows:—

Origin of Coal.	Tons per Hour.	Boilers.
Welsh	10	15
Westport (New Zealand)	12.3	23
Australian (southern N.S.W. collieries) ..	16	31

Note.—The coal here described as "Australian" came for the most part from Port Kembla. But a report from the *Sydney*, which on one occasion was supplied with coal from Abermain in the Maitland coalfield, stated that it was "of a better quality than any Australian coal previously supplied."

With the Australian coal it was also necessary to use two tons of oil, equivalent to another four tons of coal. Admiral Patey reported at the same time that "all the boiler-power had to be utilised to maintain a speed of 16½ knots" (the *Australia's* full speed was 25 knots); "the consumption was 60 per cent. higher than that of Westport, including the oil necessary to assist. The strain on the personnel and material is very great; there is a great loss of speed, and the radius of action is reduced by nearly half." As, therefore, it was

[23] The formation of a coaling battalion to supply coal to warships in spite of the strike of 1917 will be dealt with in *Vol. XI* of this history.

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impossible to count on supplies of Welsh coal—though two colliers with about 6,600 tons of this coal were despatched to Australia by the Admiralty and became available about the end of September, 1914—it was of the first importance that Westport coal should be available in large quantities. But Westport is 1,100 miles from Sydney, and at the outbreak of war the only coal of this description available in the Commonwealth was a cargo of 1,800 tons in a small and badly fitted collier, the *City of Hankow*.

The early operations of the Australian Squadron were consequently for the most part dependent on Australian coal. Should any naval critic be tempted to think poorly of the speed with which the first search of German waters and the raid on Rabaul were carried out, he will find his answer in the quality of the squadron's fuel. The *Australia* on the 1st of August took in 1,500 tons of the *Hankow's* coal and completed with Australian; the *Encounter* took the rest from the *Hankow* and completed with Australian; the *Melbourne* had to content herself with Australian coal alone. It was not till the 21st of August, at Noumea, that the *Melbourne* was able to procure Westport coal, though the *Encounter* had secured some on the 17th. From that time forward the squadron was steadily supplied with the New Zealand coal. This was rendered possible by the strenuous and well-planned efforts of Engineer-Lieutenant Mackenzie,[24] the Admiralty's coal inspector at Westport, and by the prompt action of the Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand, which placed its fleet of colliers at the disposal of the Naval Board.[25] It was mainly their work that, whereas at the end of July the Board had practically no reserve of coal to fall back on, on the 5th of August 3,000 tons of coal left Westport for Port Moresby, on the 9th 4,000 went to Noumea, on the 14th another 4,000 were despatched for the same port,

[24] Engr.-Commr. H. P. Mackenzie; R.N. Of Inverness, Scotland, and Trawalla, Vic.; b. India, 30 March, 1877.

[25] The Board had but a single collier, the *City of Hankow*, which was fitted with obsolete gear and hatches too small for quick work. The *Sydney*, whose coaling speed was on occasion 110 tons per hour, could do no better than 37½ tons with the *Hankow*. No other Government department owned any colliers, so that the Board found itself entirely dependent on the Union Company.

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and on the 15th 6,000 more followed. The amounts provided for the various operations in Australian waters during 1914 are shown in the following table (which does not include the coal taken in during the first few days of August):—

		Tons.
For the raid on Rabaul (9 to 14 August)	Australian	5,600
	Westport	2,500
Expedition to Samoa	Australian	2,400
	Westport	6,000
Occupation of Rabaul, etc.	Westport	14,515
	Welsh	5,500
Patrols in the Western Pacific (October)	Westport	13,300
Coaling first convoy's escort, at Albany, Fremantle, and Hobart	Westport	12,000

To make Mackenzie's task still more difficult, heavy south-west gales during October caused a good deal of shoaling on the Westport bar. As soon, therefore, as a collier was loaded down to fifteen feet of draught she was obliged to leave Westport, make her way to Wellington, and complete her loading there from smaller colliers; thus the *Waihora* had to leave Westport with only 3,700 tons aboard and take on 2,800 more at Wellington, and the *Mallina*—the speediest of the colliers and therefore much in request for attendance on the squadron—when called for in a hurry, had to discharge 1,200 tons on the Westport wharf before she could get out. Mackenzie, however, was equal to every emergency, and Captain Gordon Smith, then Second Naval Member, was moved to minute an official paper with the words: "The way he overcame the difficulties was almost miraculous." But for Mackenzie's unceasing labours it is improbable that Admiral Patey would have been able to take the *Australia*[26] at a moment's notice across the Pacific, accompanied by the *Mallina,* while the *Koolonga,* taking a shorter route, met him at Magdalena Bay.

When the principal units of the Australian Squadron were transferred to Atlantic waters, the Admiralty became

[26] *See p. 124.*

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responsible for their coal-supply, and the Board's activities in this direction ceased to be abnormal. For the period just described, however, the following statistics are interesting:—

——	Shipments.	Tons.	Cost.
Westport coal	18	64,249	£49,786
Australian:			
Southern	2	8,600	5,840
Newcastle	..	6,000	..
Welsh	2	6,500	..

The Newcastle coal was taken from colliers intercepted at Suva and Rossel Island at the outbreak of war; the Welsh coal was sent by the Admiralty, and there is no record of its cost. Freight is not included in any of these figures, but the freight on the Westport coal amounted to £54,185 and the charter-money of the *Mallina* and *Koolonga* to £41,796.

The supply of oil fuel was from the first better organised. The Board had a contract with the British Imperial Oil Company, and the company's vessels were held up *en route* as required—the *Cyrena* at Townsville on the 3rd of August to supply the destroyers, the *Physa* at Thursday Island on the 6th, and the *Telena* at the same place on the 12th. The two last-named vessels were kept with the squadron until the arrival of two "tankers" specially chartered for naval service —the *Murex* on the 30th of August, and the *Esturia* on the 11th of September. An Admiralty vessel, the *Elax,* also brought 2,200 tons of liquid fuel for fleet use at the end of September. Her arrival rendered possible the release of the *Murex,* and from the middle of October onwards the *Elax* and *Esturia* sufficed for the squadron's needs.

IV

The fact that in pre-war days New South Wales supplied large quantities of coal to countries bordering on the Pacific —especially to the west coast ports of South America—made it imperative when war broke out to assume control of this trade and to institute inquiries as to the destination of cargoes then afloat. Obviously no one would dare to consign coal

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to an enemy port or for the use of enemy vessels; the problems to be solved in this connection were much more complicated. Thus—to take a very simple instance—the German steamer *Detmold* was, just before war broke out, chartered by a French company (the Compagnie Française des Phosphates de l'Océanie) to carry phosphates from the Society Islands to Denmark, and took in at Newcastle (N.S.W.) coal enough for a voyage to Europe across the Pacific. At the end of September, 1914, while loading phosphates at Makatea, she was ordered to carry them back to Australia. She therefore discharged nearly 1,000 tons of bunker coal at various places in the group before leaving for Sydney. Nothing could seem more harmless. But the British authorities knew (*a*) that there was a good deal of German money in the French company, (*b*) that the managing director of the Makatea Phosphates Company was an influential German, and (*c*) that the Société Commerciale de l'Océanie, a firm owning large areas of land in the neighbouring Marquesas group,[27] was purely German except for its name. It is now fairly certain that the *Detmold's* coal did not fall into German hands—indeed, it was probably used to replace the coal burnt at Papeete when von Spee went there; but at the time the known facts supplied very reasonable grounds for suspicion.

The actual control of coal exports was from the first a matter for the Commonwealth Department of Trade and Customs, but its extreme naval importance repeatedly stirred the Naval Board to tender advice to the actual controllers, so that a sketch of the methods employed is relevant to the history of the naval operations. As with the censorship, compromises were frequently necessary between the strategic need of drastic control and the commercial need for minimising interference with trade. Thus on the 6th of August the export of coal from the Commonwealth was prohibited altogether, but on the 10th this prohibition became one merely affecting shipments to European ports, except those of France, Russia, Spain, and Portugal. It was not, however, exports

[27] *Cf.* Admiral Patey's messages of 12 and 13 October, quoted on *p. 122*. Note, too, that the German company owned the greater part of Dominica, which the *Gneisenau* visited—*see p. 109*—and large areas along the bay of Taiohaé, in which the *Scharnhorst* and *Nürnberg* anchored. This probably accounts for von Spee's visit to the Marquesas group.

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to Europe that troubled the Board so much as those going to Pacific harbours. On the 18th news came from the north that Germans in Manila were shipping large quantities of coal to some destination south-eastwards, and on the 14th of September it was again reported that two German colliers were taking on 5,000 tons each.[28] As there was in existence a contract under which 82,000 tons of Newcastle coal were to be delivered at Manila, it became important to ensure that none of this should fall into enemy hands—for that matter, the mere supply of Australian coal to Manila would obviously release for enemy use an equivalent amount of other coal, so that the real need was for some system of rationing neutral coal-supplies. A further report, of the 23rd, stated that

[28] According to the German Official History (*Der Krieg zur See, 1914-1918, Der Kreuzerkrieg in den ausländischen Gewässern, Vol. I, pp. 110 seq.*), the German naval agency in Manila—even before its control was taken over by the commander of the gunboat *Tsingtau*, who was specially sent from Canton—had at the beginning of August bought all the coal-stocks of Madrigal & Co. at Manila, and the option over all supplies of coal arriving for that firm. The colliers and other vessels despatched by the German staff from Manila were:—

7 August: *Rio Pasig* (under American flag) to Pagan, where it arrived too late for von Spee; eventually captured by a British destroyer, and the coal confiscated.

8 August: *Prinzess Alice* (N.D. Lloyd) to Yap with provisions and 150 reservists; met the *Emden* and was to have been converted to an auxiliary, but proved unsuitable. Returned to Philippines.

20 August: *Tsingtau* and *Locksun* (both N.D.L.) to Angaur; met the *Geier* and acted as her colliers.

31 August: *Hoerde* (Hamburg-America Line) to Simalur for the *Emden*. (The officer-in-charge of the naval agency left with her, handing over to another.) The *Emden* was not found, and the collier was on the 26th of September taken by a Dutch warship into Sabang and forced to unload its coal.

4 September: *Anghin* (N.D.L.) to Nusa Bessi Island, east of Timor, to meet the *Prinz Eitel Friedrich* and *Cormoran*. After waiting several weeks, the collier was forced to go for provisions to Sourabaya, where the Dutch authorities forced her to dump her coal.

27 September: *Elmshorn* (German-Australian S.S. Coy.), which had previously coaled the *Geier* and then put in to Manila, tried to leave Manila with 7,400 tons of coal for the *Cormoran* in New Guinea, but was prevented by the British auxiliary cruiser *Himalaya*.

In all, the base-agency at Manila procured 54,000 tons of coal, of which, however, only 19,000 were despatched by it from that port. At the beginning of 1915 there still lay at Manila the German colliers *Elmshorn, Bochun, Camilla Rickmers, Pongtong, Tubingen, Mark, Sambia, Lyeemoon*, and *Carl Diederichsen*. The American steamer *Robert Dollar* also was sent thither by the San Francisco agency from the east coast of America round the Cape of Good Hope. Being no longer needed, all this coal was sold during 1915.

From the German naval agency in Batavia only two cargoes of coal actually reached German warships. These were carried by two steamers of the German Australian line, the *Elmshorn* and *Bochum*, and duly reached the *Geier*. Several other ships (including the *Offenbach, Linden*, and *Ulm* of the German-Australian line) were sent to rendezvous off the Dutch islands, but practically all were brought back to port by Dutch warships, which most carefully guarded their country's neutrality. The *Preussen* (Hamburg-America) and *Roon* (N.D.L.), lying in Sabang and Tjilatjap respectively, were prohibited by the Dutch from using their wireless to relay messages between German warships. The *Choising* (N.D.L.) from Padang, however, succeeded in meeting the *Ayesha* with the *Emden's* landing-party under von Mücke, and carried them to Arabia.

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between the 7th and the 14th no less than fifteen German vessels were taking Manila coal aboard. All that the Board could do, however, was to suggest to the Commonwealth Department of Trade and Customs a joint enquiry into the ultimate destination of all coal exports, and the appointment to the Navy Office of a Customs officer who might assist in collecting and collating data. In October the Board's attention was directed towards South America; on the 12th it advised the Government that export thither should be prohibited, and on the 14th suggested the obtaining of a guarantee from Chile, as a condition of renewing supplies from Australia, that no coal would be supplied to enemy vessels. On that date the Commonwealth Government revised its policy and decided that no coal at all should be allowed to leave Australia unless the Minister of Customs gave his permission in writing, and that this permission would be refused for the Dutch Indies and the Hawaiian and Philippine groups unless the Governments of the Netherlands and the United States guaranteed that no Australian coal would reach enemy hands. On the 19th the United States gave the required guarantee in respect of any coal supplied to their contractors. Almost immediately afterwards a message was received from Admiral Patey urging that coal shipments to Honolulu should be prohibited ("Nine German steamers at Honolulu now, of which it is known definitely that three have already coaled German cruisers"), and naming a private consignee of Australian coal who was almost certainly supplying it to enemy vessels. The Commander-in-Chief on the China Station simultaneously transmitted information from South America to the effect that the local market there was over-supplied with Australian coal, and that it was being handed over to German vessels by the very consignee Admiral Patey had named. Within a few days fresh evidence from Manila showed that there too Australian coal was still procurable by the enemy. Before the end of the month, therefore, a series of negotiations and regulations had brought about the following situation:—

To Noumea, and to Ocean Island if the Defence authorities agreed, export was permitted.

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To Bombay and to Singapore export was allowed in British vessels; for Singapore consignments it was also required that the consignees should be British and that a landing certificate should be produced.

To Java export was allowed (security for £5,000 being given) for the use of certain public utilities endorsed by a resident British official.

To Chile export was allowed on similar conditions for the use of the Government railways and certain chartered companies.

For United States territory the conditions were varied. Export to San Francisco was forbidden until the United States Government should give a guarantee that it would not be re-exported. Export to Honolulu was forbidden altogether, and was allowed to Manila only on a £5,000 security being given and on condition that the coal was landed at a specified port and the landing certificate endorsed by a Government official. To other ports of the Philippine and Hawaiian groups export was allowed on security equal to half the value of the coal, and the production within three months of an official certificate that it was being used solely for Government purposes.

Scarcely had these very necessary arrangements been completed when the Premier of New South Wales demanded, in the interests of trade, a relaxation of the restrictions. It was of course natural that coal-dealers should chafe under them, but the intervention of a Premier was as unexpected as it proved unavailing. During November evidence of leakage continued to accumulate, but, on production of proof that the Honolulu coal supplied to German cruisers had been bought by German agents before the war, export to Honolulu was allowed on the Manila conditions. In December various South American States to which export was at the time prohibited accepted the Australian conditions—among them Ecuador, Uruguay, and Brazil; Colombia, however, refused to fall into line without the concurrence of the United States, "whose authority on all occasions has been considered decisive on these questions."

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The conditions just referred to varied with the different States, but one set will serve for an example:—

1. Warships shall not coal, in port or by tender, more than once in three months.
2. Merchant vessels will not be allowed to leave port until their consul signs a declaration guaranteeing that the voyage is for commercial purposes only and stating ports of call.
3. If it is found that such vessels have called at other ports, they will be debarred from trade with the signatory State in future.
4. Vessels belonging to the signatory State will be vigorously supervised.

Towards the end of December discontent was aroused among coal-dealers by the news that Japan had removed all restrictions on the sale of coal, thus placing Australian sellers at a disadvantage; but the Board advised that strategic needs must be paramount, and that restrictions should not be relaxed as long as there were hostile vessels in the Pacific. In January Chile signed[29] a satisfactory agreement, and in February it was announced that Britain had removed all restrictions on coal-exports to South America; consequently towards the end of the month the Australian policy was transformed from one of restrictions on export to certain countries into one of withholding coal from certain dealers; export to Malaysia, Mexico, Honolulu, Manila, and Central America was still conditioned by reports from the local British consul, but otherwise was free except to firms on a "black list." It was, however, obviously impossible to prevent other dealers from supplying the black-listed firms, and early in March the Naval Board approached the Prime Minister with a plan for controlling exports (not of coal only) at the port of discharge. "During the progress of the war," its minute ran,

it has become apparent to the Naval Board that in the capacity of this and other British countries bordering on the Pacific to control the war supplies of possible enemies we possess a powerful weapon.

[29] All these international agreements were negotiated through the Imperial Government.

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There is little doubt that the coal used by the German Pacific Squadron came chiefly from Australia and New Zealand, and an organisation which would deprive an enemy's fleet of these essential supplies would be one of our main defences.

There are other supplies essential for war over which it should be possible to exercise considerable control. It would appear that the present is a suitable time to investigate war requirements and means of supply, with the object of creating an organisation for exercising control in war.

"The system of qualified prohibition," added another minute,

i.e., export with the permission of the Minister of Customs and with a guarantee that the coal has not been used by the enemy, has proved futile. Exporters are loud in protest of their loyalty, but appear to be strangely helpless in preventing their coal from going to the wrong people. The profits to be made on sales of coal to an enemy are very large. Consuls have proved an ineffective authority for keeping coal out of an enemy ship.

The gist of the Board's plan was that at every important neutral port in the Pacific there should be stationed an official consignee, a paid officer of the Commonwealth, to whom alone cargoes of the controlled materials[30] might be consigned. He would verify the stated destination of Australian exports, report on the trustworthiness of the ultimate receivers, and be empowered to impound cargoes on suspicion. To make the scheme workable it would be desirable—if not absolutely necessary—to secure similar and joint action on the part of New Zealand, Canada, and Japan. Partly because this latter condition seemed quite unattainable, partly because of the growing opposition among dealers to any further restraint on their oversea trade, the Board's proposals were after long delay relegated to obscurity. The need of some such precautions had, however, been in the meantime adequately demonstrated by the receipt from Admiral Patey of a batch of press-cuttings from South American newspapers, which showed conclusively that German ships had been repeatedly coaled in Pacific ports, despite the official prohibition. Thus in November, 1914,

The *Seydlitz* had been allowed to sail for Bremen fully provisioned. . . . The *Luxor* sailed out of Coronel without papers but with 3,000 tons of coal on board, and . . . the *Memphis* did the same thing from Punta Arenas. The Chilean Government has replied by interning all the "Kosmos" steamers in Chilean ports until the

[30] The suggestion was to include in this list coal, oil, rubber, wood, iron, copper, cotton, and certain chemical products.

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end of the war. The *Karnak*, previous to this decision, had already been interned in Antofagasta, as this steamer had left Iquique without papers, fully provisioned, and had some weeks later arrived in Antofagasta empty. The captain was then ordered to leave within 24 hours, but refused, stating (it was said) that in time of war he took orders from the Kaiser only. . . . The manager of the "Kosmos" Line in Valparaiso . . . explained the matter by stating that in time of war every German merchantman was under the orders of the German Admiralty, and under such orders the captain could proceed to sea without advising him. On being asked how the *Luxor* and *Memphis* received these orders, he said "by letter." We presume this means . . . from one of the hidden wireless installations the Germans have on the coast.[31]

According to another report the "Kosmos" manager said: "under German law all commercial vessels are classed as transports of war as soon as war is declared," It was noticeable from these press reports that German vessels were able to procure coal and provisions with ease, even though the Chilean Government was loyally attempting to stop them; German audacity and private greed defeated all official prohibitions.

These facts were not, it is presumed, known to British and Australian shippers. For in the early months of 1915 their feeling of security became so pronounced and their resentment of restrictions so active, that the Admiralty found it necessary to issue a warning. British ships, it is said, seemed to consider that the danger on trade-routes was entirely past. This notion must be combated both officially and privately, since German raiders might still break through the North Sea blockade, and German merchant vessels, wherever they were hiding, might easily slip away and renew the menace to unprotected traders. At the same time the Admiralty summarised for the Commonwealth Government its policy as to the export of coal from England: exporters must confine their foreign trade to supplying the current requirements of regular customers; no coal at all must be sent to firms on the "black list," or to firms that had not been in the habit of dealing in coal. Accumulations of coal in the Philippines were already regarded with suspicion, and Japan had been asked to co-operate in preventing them; it might even be necessary to place an embargo on exports to the

[31] *South Pacific Mail*, 26 Nov., 1914.

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group. In the circumstances these restrictions were considered sufficient—but, it was admitted, one of their effects was to prevent exporting firms from asking the Admiralty's advice before undertaking doubtful business. On these hints the Commonwealth authorities determined to maintain the hold which they had on exporters, whatever complaints might follow; but the position was rendered awkward by the difficulty of obtaining co-ordination with the system adopted by Japan. On the 17th of March, for instance, the Inter-Island Company of Honolulu, which took a great deal of Australian coal, applied for leave to supply the German vessels sheltering there with seventy-five tons a month of coal for cooking, lighting, etc. After consideration it was decided to allow ten tons a month—and on the 16th of April the Company intimated that the coal would be obtained from Japan without any such restriction.

In April, despite these warnings and decisions, the actual control of coal-exports seems to have slackened, for the Minister of Customs had to issue a fresh series of instructions. Colliers must be careful in their choice of routes, since attacks by German raiders were still possible. Coal must not be diverted from its avowed purpose, either for the use of German merchant vessels or for storage. Shipments to suspected firms were prohibited, and none might be made to any firms except with the Minister's permission; but officials need not await additional permits for coal going to San Francisco, Honolulu, or the Philippines, if it was certainly destined for use by the Government of the United States. This repetition of instructions long since supposedly enforced shows that they had been unduly relaxed in practice. May passed off without trouble, but early in June reports from Manila that Japan was capturing coal-trade previously Australian led to renewed protests by the coal-dealers, again backed by the New South Wales Ministry; the Prime Minister had to invoke the authority of the Admiralty as justifying his decision to remove the restrictions. About this time, it may be noted, the Admiralty was telling the Colonial Office that "the present precautions taken by the Commonwealth and other authorities have undoubtedly rendered it very difficult for the Germans to procure both coal and steamers on the Pacific coast."

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In August conditions were again revised, and the British representatives in Peru, Chile, and the Dutch East Indies were notified that Australian coal (*a*) must not be furnished, directly or indirectly, to enemy vessels, vessels trading with enemy countries, or certain named firms; (*b*) must not be used in the production of goods or by-products of military value that may reach an enemy country; (*c*) must not be sold by one importer to another without explicit permission of a British Consul. From this time onwards the Board's share in coal-control grew smaller, and its advice was sought mainly on such questions as the trustworthiness of some oversea firm; in replying it acted almost always as the mouthpiece of the Admiralty, and the story of control ceases thenceforth to find a place in this volume.

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APPENDICES—PART I.

SEA FORCES.

No. 1.

STATEMENT OF SCHEMES FOR COMMONWEALTH NAVAL DEFENCE.

—	Vessels.	Tons each.	Knots.	War Complement.	Militia.	Maintenance Cost per Annum.	Capital Cost.
						£	£
1. Captain Creswell, 1902	4 cruisers (special design)	3,000	...	...	...	30,000 each	1,200,000
2. Captain Creswell, June, 1905, and October, 1905	3 cruiser destroyers ...	3,000	25	600	575	38,760	840,000
	16 torpedo-boat destroyers	550	26	1,120	980	61,680	800,000
	5 1st-class torpedo boats	205	25	160	100	12,140	100,000
	8 2nd-class torpedo boats	12½	18	80	65	7,420	28,000
Totals ...	32	...	...	1,960	1,720	120,000	1,768,000
3. Captain Creswell, August, 1906	3 ocean destroyers ...	800	30	...	...	27,050	420,000
	16 destroyers (River class)	550	26	...	...	61,680	1,280,000
	5 1st-class torpedo boats	200	25	..	...	12,140	150,000
Totals ...	24	...	...	...	...	100,870	1,850,000
				Permanent Men.	Militia.		
4. Commonwealth Naval Officers' Committee, September, 1906	3 ocean-going destroyers	1,300	33	882	1,128	167,970	690,000
	1 ocean-going destroyer	800	30				160,000
	16 coastal destroyers ..	550	26				1,280,000
	4 1st-class torpedo boats	157	25				120,000
Totals ...	24	...	...	...	...	167,970	2,250,000
5. Mr. Deakin, 26th September, 1906 (1st instalment of 4)	8 coastal destroyers ...	550	26	...	...	...	640,000
	4 1st-class torpedo boats	157	25	...	...	...	120,000
Totals ...	12	...	...	...	...	...	760,000

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6. Mr. Deakin, 13th December, 1907	6 destroyers (River class) 9 submarines (C class) ...	550 313	26 13 surface 8 submerged	79 Officers* 1,125 Men *	... ...	... 346,000*	473,500 496,000
	2 dépôt ships	...	...	...	...	...	308,000
Totals ..	17	...	...	...	..	346,000*	1,277,500*
7. Mr. Fisher, 30th March, 1909	4 ocean destroyers .. 16 destroyers (Improved River class), in addition to 3 already ordered	1,300 700	33 26	600 800	... ...	136,000 160,000	920,000 1,344,000
						296,000	2,264,000
	1 vessel, armed, for police duties	2,000 or— 3,000	...	...	...	30,000	...
Totals ...	24						
8. Imperial Defence Conference, 1909	1 armoured cruiser (*Indomitable* class) 3 2nd-class protected cruisers (*Bristol* class) 6 destroyers (Improved River class) ... ... 3 submarines (C class) ...	17,250 4,800 700 313	27 25 26 13 surface 8 submerged	731 1,200 300 40	... ...	750,000 (of which the Imperial Government will contribute £250,000)	3,750,000 at English prices
Totals ...	13						
9. Imperial Defence Conference, 1909 (as amended on Admiralty recommendation, 1912)	1 armoured cruiser (*Indefatigable* class) 3 2nd-class protected cruisers (*Weymouth* class) 6 destroyers (Improved River class) ... .. 2 submarines (E class) ...	17,250 4,800 700 313	27 25 26 13 surface 8 submerged	731 1,200 410 30	.. ..	750,000	4,250,000 at English prices, except for one protected cruiser and three torpedo-boat destroyers to be built in Australia
	12						

* Admiralty Estimate.

Note.—The above is a copy (corrected in certain minor details) of a statement presented to Parliament. It tabulates the successive proposals; the steps eventually adopted differed in some important respects from those proposed.

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APPENDIX No. 2.

GROWTH OF THE AUSTRALIAN NAVAL FORCES.

Year.	No. of Vessels.	Total Tonnage.	Permanent Personnel.
1901 ..	9	5,300	196
1909 ..	9	5,300	242
1914 ..	16 commissioned ..	45,342	3,730
	5 building ..	14,246	
1920 ..	37 (one building) ..	89,735	5,263 (end 1918)

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APPENDIX No. 3.

STRENGTH OF THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY AT THE OUTBREAK OF WAR.

(C = Commissioned; B = Building.)

Vessel.	Description.	Displacement.	Power.	Position.
AUSTRALIA ..	Battle-cruiser ..	19,200	44,000	C
BRISBANE ..	Light cruiser ..	5,400	22,000	B
CHILDERS ..	1st-class torpedo boat ..	63	750	C
COUNTESS OF HOPETOUN	1st-class torpedo boat ..	75	1,100	C
ENCOUNTER ..	Light cruiser ..	5,880	12,500	C
GAYUNDAH ..	Gunboat ..	360	400	C
HUON ..	Torpedo-boat destroyer	700	12,000	B
MELBOURNE ..	Light cruiser ..	5,400	22,000	C
PALUMA ..	Gunboat ..	360	400	C
PARRAMATTA	Torpedo-boat destroyer	700	12,000	C
PIONEER ..	Light cruiser ..	2,200	7,000	C
PROTECTOR ..	Gunboat ..	920	1,641	C
SYDNEY ..	Light cruiser ..	5,400	22,000	C
TINGIRA ..	Boys' training ship ..	1,800	..	C
TORRENS ..	Torpedo-boat destroyer	700	12,000	B
WARREGO ..	Torpedo-boat destroyer	700	12,000	C
YARRA ..	Torpedo-boat destroyer	700	12,000	C
AE 1 ..	Submarine ..	800	1,750	C
AE 2 ..	Submarine ..	800	1,750	C

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APPENDIX No. 4.

SHIPS BUILT OR BUILDING FOR THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY DURING THE WAR.

—	Laid down.	Launched.	Completed.	Commissioned.	Cost.
		BUILT AT SYDNEY.			£
Huon ..	25.1.1913	19.12.1914	2.2.1916	14.12.1915	148,315
Torrens ..	25.1.1913	28.8.1915	17.7.1916	3.7.1916	158,621
Brisbane ..	25.1.1913	30.9.1915	9.12.1916	31.10.1916	746,624
Swan ..	22.1.1915	11.12.1915	16.8.1916	16.8.1916	160,989
Adelaide ..	20.11.1917	27.7.1918	31.7.1922	5.8.1922	1,271,782
Biloela ..	21.10.1918	10.4.1919	5.7.1920	5.7.1920	455,000
		BUILT ABROAD.			
Kurumba ..	14.8.1914	14.9.1916	7.12.1916	7.12.1916	141,000
Platypus ..	14.10.1914	28.10.1916	2.3.1917	2.3.1917	162,000

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APPENDIX No. 5.

PERSONNEL SERVING IN OR WITH THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY DURING THE WAR.

I. PERMANENT PERSONNEL.

—	At Outbreak of War.	1915.	1916.	1917.	1918.	June, 1919.
Total officers and men ..	3,800	4,400	4,450	4,700	5,050	5,250

Proportions of personnel supplied by Royal Navy (on loan) and Royal Australian Navy:—

—	Outbreak of War.	1915.	1916.	1917.	1918.	June, 1919.
R.N.	850 (22%)	1,100 (25%)	975 (22%)	725 (15%)	825 (16%)	1,025 (19½%)
R.A.N.	2,950 (78%)	3,300 (75%)	3,475 (78%)	3,975 (85%)	4,225 (84%)	4,225 (80½%)

Provision of Officers.—Additional executive and engineer officers were obtained during the war from the Royal Australian Naval Reserve, and from among retired officers of the Royal Navy. Additional medical and administrative officers and chaplains were procured from the shore.

Cadet Midshipmen of R.A.N. College, Jervis Bay.—At the outbreak of war 28 cadet midshipmen had completed one year and eight months' training, and 31 had completed eight months. Of these, 23 were sent to the Grand Fleet in January, 1917, and 29 in January, 1918. They were distributed as follows:—

—	First Appointment, 1917.	Later Appointment, 1918.
J. C. D. Esdaile ..	H.M.A.S. *Australia* ..	H.M.S. *Redgauntlet*
J. Burnett ..	H.M.A.S. *Australia* ..	H.M.S. *Tower*
W. L. Reilly ..	H.M.A.S. *Australia* ..	Various ships
R. B. M. Long ..	H.M.A.S. *Australia* ..	H.M.A.S. *Huon*
A. D. Conder ..	H.M.A.S. *Australia* ..	H.M.S. *San Foin*
C. A. R. Sadleir ..	H.M.A.S. *Australia* ..	H.M.S. *Delphinium*
J. A. Collins ..	H.M.S. *Canada* ..	H.M.S. *Spenser*
E. A. Feldt ..	H.M.S. *Canada* ..	H.M.S. *Sybille*
J. B. Newman ..	H.M.S. *Canada* ..	H.M.S. *Winchelsea*
P. J. Kimlin ..	H.M.S. *Canada* ..	
L. F. Gilling ..	H.M.S. *Canada* ..	H.M.S. *Barham*
G. W. T. Armitage	H.M.S. *Canada* ..	H.M.A.S. *Torrens*

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—	First Appointment, 1917.	Later Appointment, 1918.
H. B. Farncombe ..	H.M.S. *Royal Sovereign*	Various ships
N. K. Calder ..	H.M.S. *Royal Sovereign*	H.M.S. *Vancouver*
H. J. H. Thompson	H.M.S. *Royal Sovereign*	H.M.S. *Petard*
F. L. Larkins	H.M.S. *Royal Sovereign*	H.M.S. *Vampire*
P. H. Hirst ..	H.M.S. *Royal Sovereign*	H.M.S. *Dauntless*
L. L. Watkins ..	H.M.S. *Royal Sovereign*	H.M.S. *Lightfoot*
E. S. Cunningham	H.M.S. *Glorious* ..	Submarine *K 17*
E. S. Nurse ..	H.M.S. *Glorious* ..	H.M.S. *Spear*
H. A. Mackenzie ..	H.M.S. *Glorious* ..	H.M.S. *Ladas*
F. E. Getting ..	H.M.S. *Glorious* ..	H.M.S. *Benbow*
H. A. Showers ..	H.M.S. *Glorious* ..	H.M.S. *Strenuous*

—	First Appointment, 1918.
J. F. Rayment ..	H.M.A.S. *Australia* ..
N. H. Shaw ..	H.M.A.S. *Australia* ..
F. H. Vail ..	H.M.A.S. *Australia* ..
L. E. Royston ..	H.M.A.S. *Australia* ..
P. C. Anderson ..	H.M.A.S. *Australia* ..
J. M. Armstrong ..	H.M.A.S. *Australia* ..
J. W. Morgan ..	H.M.A.S. *Australia* ..
H. H. Palmer ..	H.M.A.S. *Australia* ..
R. C. Casey ..	H.M.A.S. *Australia* ..
D. D. Aitken ..	H.M.A.S. *Australia* ..
G. T. Broadhurst ..	H.M.A.S. *Australia* ..
R. V. Wheatley ..	H.M.A.S. *Australia* ..
A. R. Hollingworth	H.M.S. *Canada* ..
A. J. G. Tate ..	H.M.S. *Canada* ..
P. F. Dash ..	H.M.S. *Canada* ..
L. J. Towers ..	H.M.S. *Canada* ..
C. C. Baldwin ..	H.M.S. *Canada* ..
K. Dudley ..	H.M.S. *Canada* ..
A. H. Spurgeon ..	H.M.S. *Agincourt* ..
H. G. K. Melville ..	H.M.S. *Agincourt* ..
F. G. H. Bolt ..	H.M.S. *Agincourt* ..
I. C. R. Macdonald	H.M.S. *Agincourt* ..
R. C. Spencer ..	H.M.S. *Agincourt* ..
O. F. McMahon ..	H.M.S. *Agincourt* ..
H. M. L. Waller ..	H.M.S. *Agincourt* ..
G. A. Gould ..	H.M.S. *Agincourt* ..
A. P. Cousin ..	H.M.S. *Agincourt* ..
A. K. Baxendell ..	H.M.S. *Agincourt* ..
W. H. Thurlby ..	H.M.S. *Agincourt* ..

Seamen, Stokers, Tradesmen, and other Ratings.—

R.N.—About 350 additional men were lent by the Royal Navy during the war.

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R.A.N.—The only source for the supply of boys was the *Tingira*. Additional seamen were obtained from volunteers who had served in the Royal Navy or Royal Australian Navy, and stokers from the same source as well as by recruiting of new men from the shore. Tradesmen and other ratings were recruited from the shore.

Boys trained in H.M.A.S. "Tingira."—The number of boys from this training-ship who served in the fleet before and during the war was 1,071, comprising the following drafts:

Before the War.		During the War.	
1913	185	1914	35
1914	110	1915	205
		1916	160
Total	295	1917	183
		1918 (to August 27) ..	193
		Total	776

II. ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVAL BRIGADE.

—	Outbreak of War.	1915.	1916.	1917.	1918.	June, 1919.
Compulsory trainees ..	1,153	1,558	1,578	1,951	2,367	2,582
Others	493	473	418	285	303	235

Cadets in training under the compulsory service scheme:—

—	Outbreak of War.	1915.	1916.	1917.	1918.	June, 1919.
	3,092	3,166	3,322	3,724	3,790	3,834

Numbers of R.A.N. Brigade employed in several services during the war:—

Shore service (examination, &c.) .. 53 officers; 2,444 men.
In Australian waters (mine-sweeping or patrolling) .. .. .. 18 officers; 170 men.
Beyond Australian station (gun-crews on transports, &c.) .. .. 19 officers; 250 men.

III. ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVAL RADIO SERVICE.

In Australian shore stations .. .. 37 officers; 83 men.
In island shore stations .. .. 7 officers; 12 men.
In transports and merchant vessels .. 115 operators[1]

[1] Operators in transports and merchant vessels were not members of the R.A.N., but served under mercantile marine articles.

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APPENDIX No. 6.

MERCHANT SHIPS EMPLOYED IN GOVERNMENT WAR-SERVICE

I. AUSTRALIAN MERCHANT SHIPS.
II. EX-ENEMY VESSELS.
III. CARGO STEAMERS PURCHASED BY THE COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT.
IV. TRANSPORTS REQUISITIONED BY THE COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT.

In addition to the ships on the Australian register, there worked under the Australian flag during the war a number of ships captured from the enemy in or near Australian ports, and a fleet of cargo vessels purchased by the Government in 1916.

Of these, the Australian merchant ships (shown in *Section I* of this appendix) had worked mainly on the Australian coast, and they continued to do so until requisitioned one by one, either by the Commonwealth Government or the British Shipping Controller, as transports, hospital ships, or cargo carriers.

The ex-enemy vessels (shown in *Section II*), though registered in London as the property of the King, were lent to the Australian Navy Department, and, under their new names, were for the most part employed by the Navy Department, from the end of 1914 onward, in carrying troops, horses, and cargo. Manned by Australian officers and seamen, these ships were in 1918 transferred to the Commonwealth Government Line.

The third class (*Section III*) comprised fifteen British steamers purchased by the Prime Minister (the Right Honorable W. M. Hughes) in 1916 for the purpose of helping to clear the wheat harvests then held up in Australia through lack of tonnage. These ships, which formed the nucleus of the Commonwealth Government Line, brought with them to Australia their British officers and crews, who re-engaged on Australian articles.

The Australian transport fleet (*Section IV*), although it included a few Australian coastal liners and six ex-enemy vessels flying the Australian flag, consisted mainly of British steamers which ordinarily traded to the Commonwealth. These ships were requisitioned by the Government to take the A.I.F. overseas, but, in addition to carrying troops, horses, and government stores, lifted vast quantities of wool, metals, wheat, flour, meat, and other foodstuffs mainly for the United Kingdom and France.

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I. AUSTRALIAN MERCHANT SHIPS REQUISITIONED FOR WAR PURPOSES.

Name, Gross Tonnage, Port of Registry.	Owners.	Commanders.	Carried.	Where served.	Remarks.
Amra 535 Sydney	A.U.S.N. Co. Ltd.	P. H. Day	Fijian police	Pacific; Fiji	Captured Count von Luxner, commander of the German raider *Sceadler*
Canberra 7707 Melbourne	Australian Steamships Ltd.	R. F. Douton A. E. Bencke W. T. C. Firth	British, Australian, and French troops	Indian Ocean, Mediterranean, Persian Gulf; Egypt, Basra, France, Asia Minor, India	
Cycle 3987 Melbourne	Australian Steamships Ltd.	C. E. Egan	Cargo	Pacific, Atlantic, and Indian Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, America, Siberia, Europe, India, North Africa	In Zeppelin raid, 2 Aug. 1916; encountered submarine in N. Atlantic, 5 Jan. 1917; rammed by Danish steamer, 27 Feb. 1917; attacked by submarine, May 1918 — torpedo missed ship; collided with flagship of convoy, 9 June 1918
Echunga 4589 Port Adelaide	Adelaide S.S. Co. Ltd.	W. Ellis S. A. Lucas	Cargo	Indian, Pacific, and Atlantic Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, India, America, Europe, Siberia	Attacked by submarines: (1) with gunfire off N.W. coast of Scotland, 13 April 1917; (2) in English Channel (40 miles N. by E. from Ushant), 5 Sept. 1917 — torpedoed and sunk
Era 2379 Melbourne	Australian Steamships Ltd.	A. S. Leck	Cargo	Indian Ocean, Mediterranean; Australia, Italy, North Africa	Torpedoed and sunk in Mediterranean (18 miles N.E. by E. from Cape Ténès), 1 May 1918
Grantala 3655 Adelaide	Adelaide S.S. Co. Ltd.	H. Brissenden	Australians, French seamen	Pacific; Australia, New Guinea, Fiji	

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AUSTRALIAN MERCHANT SHIPS REQUISITIONED FOR WAR PURPOSES—*continued.*

Name, Gross Tonnage, Port of Registry.	Owners.	Commanders.	Carried.	Where served.	Remarks.
Hebburn 3829 Melbourne	Huddart, Parker Ltd.	R. S. Johnson	Cargo and Naval stores	Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans, Mediterranean, Dardanelles; Europe, America, New Zealand, Australia, Africa	
Indarra 9735 Fremantle	A.U.S.N. Co. Ltd.	M. M. Osborne A. W. Newbery	British, Australian, Indian, and Serbian troops	Indian Ocean, Persian Gulf, Mediterranean; Egypt, Basra, Europe, Asia Minor, India	Attacked by submarines in Mediterranean, 12 May and 18 June 1918—torpedoes missed ship
Kangaroo 4433 Fremantle	Western Australian Government	H. C. Norris	Cargo	Atlantic and Indian Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, India, Europe	Attacked by submarine in Mediterranean, 5 April 1917—saved by own gun
Kanowna 6942 Port Adelaide	A.U.S.N. Co. Ltd.	J. Ward W. Smith S. Gilling P. H. Day	Australian, British, and New Zealand troops; cargo	Pacific, Indian, and Atlantic Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, Egypt, Europe, India, Africa, Asia Minor	
Karoola 7391 Melbourne	McIlwraith, McEacharn's Line Pty. Ltd.	W. C. E. Morgan	Australian, British, and Serbian troops; cargo	Pacific, Atlantic, and Indian Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, Egypt, Europe, South Africa, Asia Minor	Rescued passengers of wrecked s.s. *Highland Warrior,* 3 Oct. 1915
Katoomba 9424 Melbourne	McIlwraith, McEacharn's Line Pty. Ltd.	E. L. D. Moodie-Heddle	American, British, Australian, Indian, and Turkish troops	Pacific, Atlantic, and Indian Oceans, Mediterranean, Black Sea; America, Europe, Egypt, India	

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Koolonga 4260 Melbourne	McIlwraith, McEacharn's Line Pty. Ltd.	H. McDonald	Coal for Navy; Australian troops and Germans	Pacific; Australia, New Guinea, South America	
Kowarra 2800 Melbourne	Australian Steamships Ltd.	F. J. B. Crowder	Coal for Navy	North Sea	Manned by Australian officers and British seamen
Kyarra 6953 Fremantle	A.U.S.N. Co. Ltd.	J. McIntosh P. H. Day W. Smith A. J. G. Donovan	Australian, British, and Nigerian troops; cargo	Pacific, Atlantic, and Indian Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, Egypt, Europe, East and West Africa, India	Rammed by French s.s. *Espagne*, 19 Oct. 1915. Attacked by submarines: (1) in Mediterranean, near Crete, 1915—rescued by H.M.S. *Beagle;* (2) off Malta, 11 Sept. 1916—saved by own gun; (3) in English Channel (2 miles S.S.E. from Anvil Point), 26 May 1918—torpedoed and sunk
Mallina 3213 Brisbane	A.U.S.N. Co. Ltd.	W. Smith	Naval stores	Pacific Ocean	
Nairana 3042 Melbourne	Huddart, Parker Ltd.	.. ..	R.N. personnel	North and White Seas, Arctic Ocean; United Kingdom, North Russia	Employed as a seaplane carrier. Attacked Bolshevik island-fort at Archangel, Aug. 1918
Palmer 298 Sydney	A.U.S.N. Co. Ltd.	H. P. Upward	Cargo; New Zealand troops and Germans	Pacific; Fiji, Samoa	
Suva 2229 Sydney	A.U.S.N. Co. Ltd.	S. Gilling A. H. Oldham H. S. Braddyle H. P. Ritchie, V.C. W. H. D. Boyle K. E. F. Guy H. A. Buchanan-Wollaston	R.N. personnel	Indian Ocean, Arabian and Red Seas; Arabian coast, Ceylon	Employed as an auxiliary cruiser, 1915-19. Attacked Turkish garrisons on Arabian coast
Ulimaroa 5777 Melbourne	Huddart, Parker Ltd.	W. J. Wyllie	New Zealand and Indian troops; cargo	Indian, Pacific, and Atlantic Oceans, Mediterranean; New Zealand, Egypt, Europe, India	

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AUSTRALIAN MERCHANT SHIPS REQUISITIONED FOR WAR PURPOSES—*continued.*

Name, Gross Tonnage, Port of Registry.	Owners.	Commanders.	Carried.	Where served.	Remarks.
Wandilla 7785 Port Adelaide	Adelaide S.S. Co. Ltd.	C. C. Mackenzie R. Sunter	Australian, British, and New Zealand troops; cargo	Atlantic and Indian Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, Egypt, Europe, Africa	Rescued (1) crew of Danish s.s. *Viking*, Jan. 1917; (2) survivors of torpedoed Italian troopship *Minas*, Feb. 1917. Held up and examined by submarine in Mediterranean, May 1918
Warilda 7713 Port Adelaide	Adelaide S.S. Co. Ltd.	J. Sim	Australian, New Zealand, British, Canadian, and American troops; cargo	Atlantic and Indian Oceans, Mediterranean, English Channel; Australia, Egypt, Europe	Collided with French s.s. *Petit Gaudet*, 24 March 1918. Attacked by submarines: (1) in English Channel, Feb. 1918—torpedo failed to explode; (2) in English Channel (32 miles S.S.W. from Owers L.V.), 3 Aug. 1918—torpedoed and sunk
Wear 1869 Melbourne	James Paterson & Co. Pty. Ltd.	J. Hutton	Coal	Pacific; Australia, New Guinea, New Zealand	
Western Australia 2937 Fremantle	Western Australian Government	.. ..	British, Australian, New Zealand, Canadian, and American troops	English Channel; England, France	Manned by British officers and crew. Attacked by submarine in English Channel, 20 March 1918—torpedo missed ship
Willochra 7784 Port Adelaide	Adelaide S.S. Co. Ltd.	R. H. Neville A. M. Edwin J. F. S. Brown	New Zealand, Australian, British, French, Nigerian, and German troops; cargo	Pacific, Indian, Atlantic, and Arctic Oceans, Mediterranean; New Zealand, Australia, Egypt, Europe, Africa	
Winfield 3215 Port Adelaide	Adelaide S.S. Co. Ltd.	W. K. Leiper	Cargo	Indian, Pacific, and Atlantic Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, Europe, Africa, South America	
Woolgar 3085 Melbourne	Melbourne S.S. Co. Ltd.	W. Millar	Coal for Navy; British troops and Germans	Pacific Ocean; Australia, New Zealand, Singapore	

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Wyreema 6838 Melbourne	A.U.S.N. Co. Ltd.	H. P. Upward	Australian troops; cargo	Indian and Atlantic Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, South Africa, Europe	
Yankalilla 3477 Port Adelaide	Adelaide S.S. Co. Ltd.	G. A. Lang F. W. Jolliffe	Cargo	Indian, Atlantic, and Pacific Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, America, Europe, Egypt, India, Canada	
Zealandia 6660 Melbourne	Huddart, Parker Ltd.	G. B. Bates	American, British, and Australian troops; cargo	Pacific, Atlantic, and Indian Oceans, Mediterranean; America, Europe, India	Encountered submarine in Atlantic, Aug. 1918

Notes.—Besides the coastal liners and cargo vessels in the above list, the steam tugs *Coringa, Heroic, Heroine, Wato,* and *Wyola* were requisitioned by the Admiralty, and served—the first two in English waters, the next two at Gibraltar, and the *Wyola* at Malta. The small steamers *Coogee* (762 tons) and *Mourilyan* (1349 tons), the tugs *James Paterson, Champion,* and *Cecil Rhodes,* and the trawlers *Gunandaal, Koraaga,* and *Brolga* were requisitioned by the Navy Department, manned by the R.A.N. Brigade, and employed for varying periods off the Australian coast, either on coastguard duty or mine-sweeping.

The *Matunga* (1618 tons) and *Wimmera* (3022 tons) though not requisitioned by the Government for war-service, were lost as a result of the activities of the German raider *Wolf* (*see pp. 348-9*).

In a return laid on the table of the House of Representatives on the 6th of June, 1918, it was stated that the following steamers had also been withdrawn from the Australian coast—*Barwon* (2999 tons), *Bellambi* (1162), *Brisbane* (1119), *Burrumbeet* (2420), *Century* (4218), *Coolgardie* (2542), *Corrimal* (1140), *Glaucus* (1363), *Gorgon* (2885), *Innamincka* (2501), *Kapunda* (3097), *Komura* (2112), *Macedon* (4368), *Paroo* (2665), *Peregrine* (1980), *Pilbarra* (2664), and *Sydney* (1989).

The *Southborough* (3709 tons), *Emerald Wings* (3139), and *Bright Wings* (3116)—three steamers owned in Great Britain, but registered in Australia—were at the beginning of the war running under charter on the Australian coast, mainly between Port Kembla, Newcastle, Sydney, and Port Pirie, in connection with the smelting business. In 1917, as their respective charters expired, the Australian Government requisitioned the ships in order to keep them at this work, since it was important that the operations of the Port Pirie smelters, which were producing lead bullion for the British Ministry of Munitions, should not be affected. In March 1918, however, the owners of the *Bright Wings* and *Emerald Wings* (which had changed hands, and were about this time renamed *Auchinish* and *Kilbaha* respectively) were themselves allowed to work the ships under Government control. A few months later, as a result of the Government's decision to requisition all interstate vessels, they were again taken over by the Australian Shipping Controller, and run, for the remainder of the war, by an organisation known as the Interstate Central Committee. The *Southborough* was released to the British Government in April 1918, and (manned partly by Australians) left Fremantle with a cargo of wheat. On the 16th of July, 1918, she was torpedoed five miles N. by E. ½ E. from Scarborough, thirty of her crew, including the master (Captain W. H. Eade, of Cardiff, Wales), being lost.

The Dutch steamer *Tasman* (5023 tons) was requisitioned at Brisbane on the 26th of March, 1918, on behalf of the British Government, which, in conjunction with that of the United States, was forced by shortage of tonnage to seize Dutch shipping in British and American ports. Manned by Australian officers and seamen, she left Sydney on the 3rd of April for Bombay and London. On the 16th of September, while *en route* from London to India, she was torpedoed and sunk 220 miles N. by W. ¼ W. from Cape Vilano (Spain), and fourteen of her crew, including the master (Captain J. Reid), were lost.

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AMRA. Requisitioned on the 12th of September, 1917, by the Governor of Fiji for the purpose of conveying a police party to Wakaya Island, where Count von Luxner of the *Seeadler*, with two officers and three seamen, was captured by a ruse.[1] Returned to her owners on the 4th of October.

CANBERRA. Requisitioned by the Admiralty, the *Canberra* was taken over in Port Jackson on the 18th of October, 1917, and left Sydney for Egypt the following month with 800 troops, being thereafter employed as a transport between Mediterranean ports and the Persian Gulf. In 1918, after the commencement of the German offensive on the Western Front, she and the *Indarra*, with a number of other fast liners, were formed into a "flying convoy" for the purpose of rushing troops from Egypt to France to reinforce the British line there.[2] After the Armistice she embarked at Mersina (Asia Minor) released British prisoners who had been in the Kut-el-Amara garrison. Then, after taking British troops from India to England, she came home with Australian soldiers and their families, and was returned to her owners on the 27th of April, 1920.

CYCLE. Having left Newcastle on the 2nd of March, 1915, the *Cycle* loaded a full cargo of nitre at Megillones (Chile) and sailed with it on the 14th of April for Vladivostock. Between Japan and Vladivostock, which was reached on the 9th of June, dense fogs were met. Vladivostock Harbour was fairly full of ships discharging war-material, huge stacks of which were waiting on the wharves for transport inland. The *Cycle's* cargo, however, was put into railway trucks and taken away. She returned to Melbourne at the end of July. A month later she left Brisbane for San Francisco and Powell River (British Columbia). She came back to Sydney in mid-November and for some months served in Australian waters.

On the 22nd of March, 1916, the *Cycle* was chartered by the Commonwealth Government and cleared from Adelaide with a cargo of wheat. On arrival at St. Vincent (31 May), she was directed to proceed to Cherbourg; on the 9th of June, however, the steering engine broke down in the submarine danger-zone. Captain Egan[3] kept the ship away to the north-west of her proper course while the engineers repaired the damage, but within a few hours it had broken down again. He thereupon rigged tackles to the rudder and steered with poop winch till she made port on the 14th. From Cherbourg she was sent to Le Havre, thence to Glasgow, Liverpool, and London. On the night of the 2nd of August, while she was anchored in The Downs waiting for the London pilot, a Zeppelin bombed the shipping. "At 2 a.m. (wrote her master) I was awakened by a terrific explosion, the ship trembling excessively. A few moments later . . . another explosion . . . shook the ship violently. The second officer came to my room . . . his clothes were wet." The first bomb had fallen close to the *Cycle's* stern, the second between her and the ship anchored abeam.

Before the *Cycle* left London on the 15th of August to load explosives at Falmouth, a 4.7-inch gun was mounted on the poop deck and two naval gunners were embarked, but both gun and gunners were taken off at Dakar on the 30th. Making Fremantle on the 18th

[1] A fuller account of this episode is given on *pp. 366-7.*

[2] Details of their experiences are given on *pp. 424-6.*

[3] Capt. C. E. Egan. Master mariner; of Melbourne; b. Merino, Vic., 1863.

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of October, she left again on the 4th of November, taking on a 3-pounder gun and gunners at Dakar, which was left on the 22nd of December. The captain records that on the 5th of January she ran into a "strong northerly gale, heavy rain squalls . . . heavy seas breaking on board. Vessel making slow progress . . . 8 p.m. similar weather conditions. Moon obscured at times by passing clouds. While I was in my room attending to one of the men, the Chief Officer called for me to come on the bridge at once. I instantly went up. He informed me there was a submarine alongside on the port beam going in the opposite direction about seventy to a hundred feet off. At that moment the 6 to 8 p.m. lookout man reported he had seen the wake of something that passed close ahead of the ship; he had never seen anything like it before. Shortly after we saw the submarine on our port quarter, about half-a-mile away on the top of a sea. It was brought astern, then we lost sight of it in the trough of the sea. Shortly after it was seen on our starboard quarter. It was again brought astern. I kept the *Cycle* zigzagging . . . making slow progress . . . and keeping the submarine astern. The gale was increasing in force and heavy seas breaking on board, over the gun and gunners, the *Cycle* labouring and rolling heavily. I gave orders to the gunners not to fire until I told them, as I did not want the submarine to know the small calibre of our gun, and I considered he had enough with wind and sea . . . without looking for more trouble. About 10 p.m. the wind increased to cyclonic force with heavy hail and rain, and a mountainous sea which lasted for about four hours. When the weather cleared, no sign of the submarine could be seen. I continued zigzagging until daylight."

Leaving Cherbourg at 1 p.m. on the 12th, the captain of the *Cycle* was instructed to arrive at the Whistle buoy off Le Havre between 11 p.m. and 2 a.m., when a pilot would take him inside the harbour. Arriving off the buoy at 11.30 p.m. he was told by the patrol-boat to go north six miles where the pilot was waiting. No pilot, however, was found, despite further inquiries of the patrol-boat, and the *Cycle* had to wait outside until midday—a most trying experience in that area—before receiving permission to enter by herself. After docking at Cardiff, she arrived off Gibraltar on the 27th of February, and, while awaiting the examination boat, was run into and badly damaged by a Danish steamer, this necessitating a fortnight's detention for repairs. Resuming her voyage on the 11th of March, she called at Port Said, Colombo, Calcutta, Singapore, Nauru, and Ocean Island, and thence proceeded to Sydney (31 July).

After remaining for the next six months in Australian waters, she was, on 21 January, 1918, taken over at Fremantle by the Admiralty, and eight days later (having for the first time been equipped with wireless) left that port with a cargo of wheat. At Port Said (where a 12-pounder gun was fitted) she joined a convoy for Malta, being chosen as flagship, thence went by herself to Sfax (Tunis), and—in company with the s.s. *War Dog*—to Bizerta, there joining a convoy for Gibraltar, whence, with a strong escort, she went as flagship of a fleet of some fifty vessels to England. After discharging at Hull at the beginning of May, she proceeded to the Tyne and thence to Falmouth. During this voyage a torpedo was fired at her, but passed under her stern. She next left with a large convoy for the Mediterranean; but on the 9th of June, while altering course, collided

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with the flagship, and had to spend three weeks in Gibraltar undergoing repairs. From Gibraltar she went to Huelva on the Spanish coast and back to Glasgow, and on the 12th of August was off again to the Mediterranean. Having left Gibraltar on the 21st, she arrived at Spezia on the 27th, Naples (30th), and Bizerta (14 September). On the 19th she sailed from Bizerta in convoy for Gibraltar, accompanied by a strong escort and an observation ship, whose balloon, however, was lost in very rough weather, the observers being saved. During the trip submarines were encountered, three torpedoes being fired at the convoy without finding a mark. On the Spanish coast the ships were put in single file, hugging the land as close as safe navigation would permit, until Gibraltar was made on the 24th of September. On the 29th she joined a large fleet of ships bound for Cuba; on the 2nd of October she and an Italian ship were diverted from the convoy, the route given them being practically that made by Columbus on his first voyage of exploration. From Santiago she proceeded to Charleston (7 November) and Newport News (11th)—"great rejoicing in the town" at the news of the Armistice. She returned to England, then made a voyage to the Mauritius for sugar, and, after discharging it at London, was sold to foreign owners.

ECHUNGA. Under charter, the *Echunga* left Sydney in April, 1915, for Calcutta *viâ* Port Kembla, Albany, and Colombo. Loading gunnies and rice at Calcutta in June, she then sailed for Buenos Aires, and thence, with a cargo of maize, by way of Rio Janeiro, Pernambuco, St. Vincent, and Madeira, to Hull. This was followed by a voyage to New York and Savannah for war-material, which was taken to Vladivostock round The Cape. After docking at Nagasaki, she returned to Melbourne, loaded flour for Bordeaux, and eventually in February, 1917, was taken over by the Admiralty at Middlesborough and converted to an oil-tanker. Her Australian officers and crew (except 27 who joined the British forces) thereupon returned to Australia. During her voyaging as a cargo-steamer she carried neither wireless nor gun, and, though on at least one occasion chased by a submarine up the English Channel, she suffered no damage from enemy craft.

Her career as a tanker was brief and adventurous. On the 13th of April, 1917, a submarine attacked her with gun-fire off the north-west coast of Scotland, but she was rescued. Her end came, however, on the 5th of September when, forty miles N. by E. from Ushant Island, she was torpedoed and sunk, nine lives being lost.

ERA. Requisitioned by the Imperial Government and taken over at Sydney on the 17th of January, 1918, the *Era* left Australia with a cargo of flour for Messina, and subsequently loaded heavy ore at Bougie (Algeria), sailing from that port in company with another vessel and escorted by two French armed-trawlers. About 8 a.m. on the 1st of May, eighteen miles N.E. by E. from Cape Ténès, a submarine rose between the *Era* and her consort, and fired at the latter two torpedoes which missed their mark. The enemy then turned his attention to the *Era*, which was struck amidships and sank in less than a minute, 11 out of her crew of 34 being lost. It is said that the submarine was immediately afterwards sunk by gun-fire from one of the trawlers.

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GRANTALA. Taken over by the Navy Department on the 7th of August, 1914, the *Grantala* was fitted up at Garden Island as a hospital ship. She left Port Jackson on the 30th and ran up the coast to Townsville, where she was ordered to Rabaul, which for a time became the squadron's base. On the morning of the 13th of September, while steaming at an even speed not far from Blanche Bay, she was suddenly brought to a standstill by a shot across her bows from a destroyer (the *Yarra*), which was searching for the German naval yacht *Komet.* After a hurried scrutiny, the destroyer allowed her to proceed. Within an hour of the ship's anchoring in Simpson Harbour, the wounded were brought aboard; and several days later, when the French cruiser *Montcalm* arrived at Rabaul,[4] a number of her sick were transferred to the *Grantala.* During the first week in October she was ordered with the squadron to Suva, and remained at that base until the defeat of the German squadron off the Falklands, when she came back to Sydney and was paid off, being returned to her owners in the following February.

HEBBURN. Completed by the shipbuilders at Blyth in April, 1915, the *Hebburn* was commissioned by the Belgian Relief Committee to take a cargo of foodstuffs from New York to Rotterdam. Then, after a voyage to Australia and New Zealand and back *viâ* America, she was in April, 1916, requisitioned by the Admiralty to carry coal and stores for the navy, and ran between American, African, and French ports. During the course of one such voyage, while in company with part of the fleet in South American waters, she was used as a decoy in an unsuccessful attempt to entrap the German raider *Moewe.* On another occasion, when Quilimane (Portuguese East Africa) was threatened by a German force, the ship's officers and crew volunteered and served for some forty-eight hours in the trenches, successfully helping to withhold the enemy until reinforcements arrived. Later, when proceeding through the Dardanelles, she fouled the sunken warship *Majestic* and had to be towed off by destroyers. She was finally released by the Admiralty in 1919 and turned over to her owners. During the war years the personnel of the ship was not Australian, except Chief Engineer Rutherford,[5] who served in her throughout.

INDARRA. Requisitioned by the Admiralty, the *Indarra*[6] was taken over in Port Jackson on the 24th of October, 1917, and fitted out at Garden Island. After loading at Sydney and Melbourne a full cargo of wool, lead, and troop stores, and embarking at the latter port 50 nurses (for India) and 1,000 troops, she sailed at noon on the 26th of November. At Colombo she was warned of the probable presence of a raider in the Indian Ocean, and on the 19th of December sighted a strange vessel coming towards her at high speed from the south, evidently with the idea of crossing her bow. Being suspicious, Captain Osborne turned north and increased the *Indarra's* speed to fifteen knots. The stranger (which, however, cannot have been the *Wolf*—the only German raider which had recently been in the Indian Ocean) thereupon put out all his lights and disappeared. After landing the troops at Suez on the

[4] *See plate at p. 100.*

[5] Chief Engineer D. C. Rutherford. Marine engineer; of East Melbourne, Vic.; b. Glasgow, Scotland, 31 May, 1882.

[6] *See plate at p. 420.*

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27th of December and the cargo at Port Said, she took in 800 tons of sand ballast and was sent first to Ismailia (27 January) and thence to Alexandria (6 February) to await further orders. On the 22nd of February and again on the 12th of March she left with troops for Taranto, and in April joined a convoy of fast ships (including the *Canberra*), formed for the purpose of rushing reinforcements to the Western Front.[7]

After the Armistice she carried 600 Serbians from Egypt to Salonica, made several trips from that port to Taranto, to Constantinople, and to Batum (bringing from that place the Georgian and Armenian delegates to the Peace Conference), went thence to Alexandria for docking, and, after two runs to Marseilles (one with General Allenby and his staff), left Port Said for Bombay, where she embarked 900 troops and 300 civilians for England. Then on the 12th of July, 1919, she sailed from Tilbury for Australia with soldiers and their families, and was returned to her owners on the 24th of September. Just before the Armistice her Australian crew, their articles of service having expired, had returned home; but her officers and engineers served in her throughout.

KANGAROO. Completed by the shipbuilders in 1915 to the order of the Western Australian Government for trade on the coast, the *Kangaroo* during the war carried cargo for the Government of that State, taking wheat, flour, etc., overseas and returning with general cargoes. About 5.55 a.m. on the 5th of April, 1917, while proceeding in a smooth sea through the Mediterranean (latitude 34° 55′ N., longitude 20° 50′ E.), she sighted a submarine above water some five miles distant. The report of her master (Captain H. C. Norris[8]) runs: "I turned ship to N.W. (afterwards west) and sent out wireless signal *re* sighting. Submarine opened fire (2 shots practically together). Red ensign was hoisted and we opened fire in return. S.O.S. signal sent out and smoke box used. . . . About 6.30 a.m. one of the enemy's shells struck ship, doing damage. No one was injured. Submarine gaining on ship (rocket distress signals were used), firing rapidly—at least, nearly two shells to our one, all falling very close to ship, we replying as opportunity offered. We used 36 out of 50 shells on board. At 7.20 a.m. submarine stopped firing, gradually disappearing below water. After our firing once more, I gave order to cease firing and continued our voyage. . . . No flag, mark, or number was distinguishable on submarine, which mounted two guns."

KANOWNA. Requistioned by the local military authorities at Townsville on the 8th of August, 1914, the *Kanowna* joined the fleet at Port Moresby in September, but *en route* to German New Guinea was, in consequence of trouble on board, ordered back to Townsville, being returned to her owners on the 21st of the month.[9]

Taken up again on the 1st of June, 1915, as a transport, she embarked troops and cargo at Sydney, Adelaide, and Fremantle, and, after landing the troops in Egypt and the cargo in London, was forthwith fitted up as a hospital ship.[10] Embarking her medical and

[7] Details of this work are given on *pp. 424-6.*

[8] Capt. H. C. Norris. Commanded *Kangaroo* since 1915. Master mariner; of Claremont, W. Aust., and London: b. London, 26 June, 1869.

[9] *See pp. 75-8.*

[10] *See Vol. XII, plate 39.*

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nursing staff at the end of September, she left Victoria Docks with some 300 R.A.M.C. reinforcements (officers and men) for the Mediterranean and 70 patients, picked up a few more patients at Malta, and went on to Alexandria and Suez to fill up her wards. The October heat in the Red Sea was very trying; the wards below deck got very little air, and at this time there was a shortage of ice and of electric fans. Patients were landed in all the Australian States; and for the next four years the *Kanowna* ran between Australia, England, and Egypt, using both The Cape and Suez routes. On occasion she carried to England British invalids from India, Egypt, Malta, and South Africa. Her capacity for patients (all cot cases) was 452, the medical and nursing staff numbering 88, and the crew 114.[11]

On reaching Suez from Australia in May, 1917, she was (in consequence of the unrestricted submarine campaign) not allowed to go through the Mediterranean, but was turned back and ordered to proceed with convalescent patients to England *viâ* Durban, Cape Town, and Dakar. The nursing sisters and stewardesses went overland to Alexandria, across the Mediterranean, and through France to London, where they were distributed among hospitals until able to rejoin the ship at Avonmouth in July.

On the 31st of October, 1918, after the armistice with Turkey, she repatriated from Fouges Bay in the Gulf of Smyrna 900 of the British prisoners in Turkey, including some 50 Australians. She was returned to her owners on the 29th of July, 1920.

KAROOLA. Taken over by the Commonwealth Government on the 9th of May, 1915, as a transport, the *Karoola* loaded wool and general cargo at Sydney and Melbourne and then embarked troops at Brisbane, Sydney, and Fremantle, leaving for Egypt on the 25th of June in company with the *Wandilla.* When nearing Perim the transports were diverted to Aden for two days in consequence of an expected attack by the Turks.[12] After landing her troops at Suez the *Karoola* proceeded to Marseilles, and then made for England with all speed; upon arrival at Southampton, she was converted into a hospital ship with accommodation for 463 patients. Sailing for Alexandria on the 9th of September, she now embarked a full complement of sick and wounded for England. On the night of the 3rd of October an S.O.S. message was picked up from the Nelson liner *Highland Warrior,* which, on her way to the River Plate with a general cargo and bullion, had in a fog run ashore on the Spanish coast under Cape Ortegal lighthouse. After an exchange of messages with other ships in the vicinity, the *Karoola's* master (Captain Morgan[13]) decided to turn back to her. Arriving at the scene of the wreck in the early morning, the *Karoola's* boats rescued the *Highland Warrior's* passengers (29), a shallow-draft Portuguese ship taking off the bullion later in the day.

[11] Though herself never once molested by enemy craft during the whole of her long voyaging, the *Kanowna* sighted the Blue Funnel liner *Tyndareus* off The Cape on 6 February, 1917, a few hours after that vessel had struck one of the *Wolf's* mines and her troops had been taken off by the hospital ship *Oxfordshire.*

[12] *See pp. 426-7.* The *Medic* and *Suevic,* bound for Egypt with Australian troops, were also sent thither.

[13] Capt. W. C. E. Morgan. Commanded s.s. *Karoola,* 1911/28. Master mariner; of Strathfield, N.S.W.; b. London, 15 Aug., 1869. Died 10 Dec., 1928.

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Her next voyage took her to Australia, which was reached in December, with 500 invalids. Thenceforth, during the next three years, she ran between the Commonwealth and the United Kingdom, either *viâ* the Cape or Suez, and on several occasions picked up at South Africa British sick and wounded for passage to England. Shortly before the Armistice she was ordered to Beirut and Tripoli for the purpose of repatriating numbers of British and Serbian troops to Alexandria.[14] Then, following upon a voyage from Malta to Australia with wounded, and a trip to Durban, she was returned to her owners at Sydney in June, 1919.

KATOOMBA. Requisitioned in 1918 by the British Government for the purpose of conveying American troops to England, the *Katoomba* left Melbourne on the 2nd of June and arrived off the Panama Canal on the 30th. In the West Indies guns were mounted on the ship and naval gunners sent aboard to take charge of them. Immediately upon arrival at New York on the 11th of July, troops began to embark—in all, 2,200 were carried by her on the first voyage across the Atlantic. At this time the waters off New York were infested with German submarines, and shipping losses were becoming increasingly heavy. On the 13th the *Katoomba* left New York in company with some two dozen other transports—including the *Zealandia;* the escort consisted of the United States armoured-cruiser *Montana* and several destroyers, but the latter left the convoy after the first day out. The run across to Liverpool was made in safety, a British destroyer-flotilla meeting the convoy off the Irish coast.

In mid-August the *Katoomba* began her return trip to New York; at about longitude 15 or 20 west the convoy parted, each vessel making her way independently. On the 21st, about 200 miles from Nantucket, an S.O.S. message was received from the Blue Funnel liner *Diomed.* The *Katoomba*—then forty miles behind—raced to her assistance, only to find that she had been captured by a submarine and sunk by gun-fire. Her crew, with the exception of two who were killed, had been already picked up by an oil-tanker.

On Sunday the 1st of September, the *Katoomba,* with 2,000 Americans on board, again left New York for Liverpool. No submarines were encountered, but, while passing through the ice and fog-bound regions, a number of ships in the convoy narrowly missed colliding with one another.

At the conclusion of this voyage the *Katoomba* was sent with others to the Mediterranean.[15] At day-break on the 4th of October the convoy was attacked off the south of Ireland and the *Hirano Maru* torpedoed and sunk with heavy loss of life, her master (Captain H. Fraser, one of the few remaining British commanders in the Japanese service) being among the drowned. One of the American escorting destroyers, after dropping six depth-charges in the vicinity, picked up the few survivors of the ill-fated ship. On account of the constant alarms and attacks, the convoy was ordered into Gibraltar to re-form, and continued its voyage next day, Captain Moodie-Heddle[16] of the *Katoomba* being appointed vice-commodore of the fleet. Conditions in the Mediterranean at this time were alarming; it

[14] *See plate at p. 428.*

[15] *See Vol. XII, plate 33.*

[16] Capt. E. L. D. Moodie-Heddle. Commanded s.s. *Katoomba* since 1913. Master mariner; of Middle Brighton, Vic.; b. Orkney, Scotland, 6 Oct., 1875.

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was said that submarines went so close to ships as to make collision probable, and then showed their navigation lights in order to make the ships disclose their presence and course. In consequence of this masters had orders to fire on any vessel showing a light. Nevertheless the convoy arrived safely at Port Said.

After some delay the *Katoomba*, carrying 1,000 British soldiers of the Essex Regiment and 1,000 Turkish prisoners, left for Salonica in company with the Orient liner *Ormonde* and the P. & O. *Caledonia*, four Japanese destroyers forming the escort. On the 14th of November she sailed for Constantinople with 2,000 men from the Essex and Middlesex Regiments, and had the distinction of being the first British troopship to pass through the Dardanelles since the outbreak of the war. Upon disembarking these troops, she took on board British and Indian prisoners, many of whom had been captured at Kut and were in a seriously emaciated condition; among them were 26 Australians. Two days later she left for Mudania, four hours' steam from Constantinople, and again embarked, under difficult weather conditions, a number of released prisoners, including four generals. Her next trip after returning to Salonica was to Batum on the Black sea coast (22 December) with 2,500 British troops. In all, the *Katoomba* made six successive trips to Batum, landing 14,000 troops and repatriating large numbers of Turks; on the second voyage she carried army nurses and medical personnel to staff several hospitals that were set up in the district.

Then followed a voyage to Bombay (reached on the 26th of April, 1919) with Indians returning home from the Macedonian campaign. From there she left on the 15th of May with troops and civilians for England, and in August returned to the Commonwealth with Australian soldiers and their families. After being reconditioned in Sydney, she was handed back to her owners. During her voyaging in the Mediterranean she sighted four mines, two of which were sunk by her gunners.

KOOLONGA. Requisitioned at Port Kembla on the 6th of August, 1914, the *Koolonga* joined the fleet at Port Moresby.[17] After the capture of New Britain she returned to Sydney (bringing with her some German prisoners), was docked, equipped with wireless, and ordered to Westport to load bunker coal. After doing so, she followed the *Australia* across the Pacific and kept in touch with the warships patrolling off Central America. With the disappearance of the German fleet in those waters, she returned to Sydney in May, 1915, and resumed her ordinary running on the Australian coast.

KOWARRA. Upon her completion in England in February, 1916, the *Kowarra* was requisitioned by the Admiralty and employed as a collier with the Grand Fleet. All her officers had served on the Australian coast before the war, but her crew was composed of British seamen signed on under naval articles for the duration of the war. She coaled American as well as British ships at Rosyth and Scapa Flow and in the Firth of Forth, among the latter being the *Iron Duke*, *Tiger*, *Princess Royal*, *Indefatigible*, *Australia*, *Melbourne*, and *Sydney*. During the whole of her war service until the surrender of the German Fleet, she never once encountered an enemy submarine. She was returned to her owners in May, 1919.

[17] *See page 78.*

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KYARRA. Requisitioned on the 6th of November, 1914, and fitted as a hospital ship, the *Kyarra* left Australia with five hospital units, which were disembarked at Alexandria. While returning through the Canal to Suez to pick up invalids for Australia, she was given orders to proceed at full speed, as the Turks had begun to attack the waterway. In March, 1915, she was converted into a transport and commenced her new work in the following month by embarking at Sydney and Brisbane 900 troops, whom she carried to Egypt *viâ* the Torres Straits. During the next three years she transported from Australia oversea five more batches of troops, as well as full cargoes—leaving in August, 1915,[18] and again in January, June, and November, 1916, and September, 1917 (this time, owing to the seamen's strike, with a "scratch" crew). On her way back to Australia in March, 1917, she was used by the Admiralty to carry native troops from Sierra Leone to Dar-es-Salaam, as were the *Barunga* and *Boonah*. After a month's delay at the former port, she was detained for several weeks in quarantine at Dar-es-Salaam, and did not reach the Commonwealth until July.

Before meeting her end in May, 1918, she had a number of experiences with enemy submarines. On one occasion (in 1915) the British destroyer *Beagle* rescued her from a submarine off Crete. At the beginning of August, 1916 (on her fourth trip, under Captain McIntosh[19]), she arrived off the English Channel, and was escorted into Plymouth by two destroyers. On the way one of them signalled asking if the *Kyarra* could put on more speed as "submarines are very active in the vicinity"; her watches had already been doubled. After disembarking the troops, she had just left harbour for Cardiff when with other ships she was ordered back while the Channel was swept for drifting mines. At Cardiff a gun was mounted on her after deck, and she left for Marseilles to deliver the wheat she brought from Australia,[20] and went thence, empty, to Port Said. When close to Malta in the afternoon of the 11th of September, her crew witnessed a destroyer rounding up a submarine; at 8 p.m. the signal for "all hands to boat stations" was blown. A double ring was given on the engine-room telegraph (the signal to the engine-room that the ship was being chased). The watch in the stokehold was double-banked and the engines opened full out. A submarine had been picked up on the starboard quarter, and two shots, at about ten minutes' interval, were fired at her. After the first shot the *Kyarra's* smoke, which hung very low over the water, obscured the submarine from the gunners (Scottish fishermen before the war), but their second shell hit, and no more was seen of her.

Having at the end of December, 1917, returned to Sydney with cornsacks from Calcutta, the *Kyarra* was soon again on her way to England, this time not carrying troops, but a full cargo of foodstuffs and mail. Proceeding *viâ* New Zealand and Panama, she received orders after leaving the Canal to join a convoy at Newport News. The run across the Atlantic was uneventful; the *Kyarra* acted as "guide" to the fleet (twenty-seven ships, in all) until it reached the English Channel, when it broke up and each vessel proceeded

[18] While the *Kyarra* was berthed at Marseilles on 19 October, 1915, the French steamer *Espagne* collided with her, causing some damage.

[19] Capt. J. McIntosh. Commanded s.s. *Kyarra*, 1914/17. Master mariner; of Sydney; b. Aberdeen, Scotland, 27 March, 1880.

[20] As well as cargo transhipped from the *Wandilla* at Cardiff.

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independently at full speed. After the cargo had been discharged, the *Kyarra* was refitted at Tilbury Docks to carry invalids to Australia and was camouflaged. She left for Devonport about 10 a.m. on the 24th of May, 1918, to embark 1,000 patients. Besides her crew of 112, she was carrying 34 military details, 5 gunners, and a naval officer, who was making the journey to Devonport in order to test the recently-fitted "otter" gear (for sweeping up mines). Following instructions, she anchored for the night off The Nore and proceeded at day-break, clearing The Downs in the forenoon and zigzagging her way as far as St. Helen's Bay (Isle of Wight), where she dropped anchor at 9.30 p.m. At 4 a.m. she left the anchorage and steamed inside The Needles channel, slowing down for a short time at 7 o'clock so that the mine-sweeping gear could be lowered. About 9 a.m., when two miles S.S.E. from Anvil Point, the wake of a torpedo was seen; though the helm was put hard over, the *Kyarra* could not avoid the torpedo, which struck her in the forward stokehold on the port side. While the life-boats were being lowered, Captain Donovan[21] vainly tried to get her into shallow water, but the main engines soon stopped, and he was unable to move the steering-gear. Attempts to close the water-tight door in the engine room had to be abandoned owing to the inrush of water, and, as the vessel was rapidly sinking, all hands were ordered to the boats.

The especial danger to the engine-room staff in this and other ships may be judged from the recorded experiences of the Second Engineer (E. F. Wharton[22]), who, when the explosion occurred, was waiting for his breakfast in the mess-room. "For a second or two one seemed to be forced through the deck and then, as the ship heeled over, to be carried to the door. I rushed down below (a matter of seconds) and reached the middle grating; the water by this time was nearly up to it. A man was hanging on to the grating, his body being forced underneath by the rush of water coming from the stokehold . . . like a dry dock sluice. I lifted him out and placed him on the ladder to go up . . . then had a look round the back of the starboard engine, and coming back . . . waited at the foot of the ladder. You could feel the vessel sinking by this. My greaser came along; he had been cleaning out the snow chutes of the freezer in No. 3 hold. He had to crawl through the snow chute into the engine room after the torpedo hit us. . . . The water . . . was rising pretty quick and was over our boots, and I followed him up the ladder. When I reached the engine-room door the Chief came along and said, 'Do you think she is stopped?' I then got a stilson wrench with the idea of shutting the top valves from the top platform. Turning round to go down the ladder again, I got a surprise, for the Fourth Engineer and three men were coming up. The three men had been washed into the engine-room from the aft stokehold, along with the man I had pulled out. They were under water while I was down below, and had struggled out after the rush of water had eased up and begun to rise. The last I saw of the engine room, the water was close up to the main engine cylinder-tops."

[21] Capt. A. J. G. Donovan. Master mariner; of Potts Point, N.S.W.; b. Hull, Eng., 31 Dec., 1869.

[22] Chief Engineer E. F. Wharton. Marine engineer; of Sydney; b. Grimsby, Lincolnshire, Eng., 20 Nov., 1884.

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The *Kyarra* foundered sixteen minutes after she was hit, the last boat, containing the captain, pilot, second engineer, and three men having some difficulty in getting clear. All the boats pulled into Swanage Bay and made a landing about midday. The fifth engineer, three firemen, and a trimmer were lost in the ship, and a steward's boy (a nephew of Captain Donovan), who was leaning over the rail above the spot where the torpedo exploded, was so seriously injured that he died in hospital shortly after landing.

MALLINA. Requisitioned by the Navy Department on the 14th of August, 1914, the *Mallina* was employed as a supply-ship for the R.A.N. in the Pacific, and returned to her owners on the 1st of February, 1915.

NAIRANA. In 1915 the *Nairana* was nearing completion at the shipbuilders in Dumbarton, when, in consequence of the exigencies of war, work on merchant tonnage in British yards was for a time practically discontinued. In August, 1917, however, she was converted by the Admiralty into a seaplane carrier, manned by the Royal Navy, and attached to the battle-cruiser force based on the Firth of Forth. Sent to the White Sea during the summer period of 1918 and 1919, she was in August of the former year ordered to participate with a light cruiser in an attack upon a Bolshevik island-fort at the entrance to Archangel. Though some casualties occurred in the cruiser, the *Nairana* emerged from the engagement without damage, her seaplanes bombing the fort out of action. After the war she was at Devonport reconstructed to her original design as a passenger ship and delivered to her owners in December, 1920.

PALMER. At the outbreak of the war the *Palmer* (then 30 years old) was relieving the *Amra* in the Fiji inter-island trade, and, shortly after the New Zealand occupation of Samoa, was sent there with a full load of foodstuffs. Meeting a cyclone on the way, she could barely make two knots an hour, and, as she was loaded down, water began to pour in, particularly at the forward end of the ship. On the advice of the second officer, the ship was turned round and, while she ran with the wind, some of the forward cargo was transferred to the stern in order to lift the bows; then, resuming her course, she eventually reached Apia (eight or nine days overdue), and returned to Suva with some fifty German prisoners, who were transported by another vessel to New Zealand.

SUVA. Requisitioned at Brisbane by the Admiralty on the 19th of July, 1915, the *Suva* was fitted at Garden Island (Sydney) with two 4.7-inch guns and a platform for a third weapon, which was taken on at Colombo. Her proposed work was to consist in hunting down gun-runners, but on arrival at Aden she was not considered suitable for this rôle, and her captain (S. Gilling[23]) was therefore ordered to take her back to Colombo. Here her Australian officers and crew were replaced by British naval officers and ratings, and she afterwards performed good work patrolling the Arabian and Red Seas and (in 1917) sweeping up the mines laid by the *Wolf* off the coast of Ceylon. It is recorded that in 1916 she played a not inconsiderable part in supporting the Arab revolt.[24] She bombarded En Wei (21 March),

[23] Capt. S. Gilling. Commanded s.s. *Suva*, 1915/16; *Kanowna*, 1916/18. Master mariner; of Stanthorpe, Q'land; b. Altrincham, Cheshire, Eng., 1874.

[24] *See pp. 238-9.*

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Akaba (5 April), and Kunfida (2 July); in January and June respectively she landed at En Wej and Salif naval forces which occupied these towns after the garrisons of both had surrendered. In June, 1917, she bombarded Hodeida and twelve months later did the same (on two occasions) at Loheiya. At the beginning of November, 1918, she handed the armistice terms to the Turkish garrisons at Mokha and Hodeida; but in mid-December it again became necessary for her to bombard Hodeida, from which the garrison fled when a force was landed to occupy the place.

Upon returning to Australia in 1919 the *Suva* was utilised to convey Admiral Jellicoe on his tour of inspection of New Guinea, and on the 19th of December was handed back to her owners.

ULIMAROA. In January, 1916, the *Ulimaroa* was requisitioned in New Zealand by the Dominion Government, and returned to her owners in February, 1920. During her four years' service she steamed 225,000 miles and carried 16,000 troops, mainly New Zealanders. In all she made five voyages to England and three to Egypt, the one exception to her usual run being a trip from India to Egypt with native troops. Though on several occasions attacked by enemy submarines, she escaped without damage. Her master (W. J. Wyllie[25]), as well as some of her Australian officers and crew, served in her throughout this period; new hands were signed on principally in New Zealand.

WANDILLA. In May, 1915, the *Wandilla* was requisitioned in Melbourne and fitted up as a transport. At Sydney on the 5th of June she embarked about 150 officers and men and then called at Melbourne and Fremantle for the balance of her quota, eventually leaving Australia on the 25th of the month in company with the *Karoola*. Further details of her war service, during which she steamed 191,414 miles and carried 36,332 troops, are given on *pp. 426-8*.

WARILDA. Requisitioned by the Commonwealth in August, 1915, and fitted as a transport, the *Warilda* made two voyages with troops to Egypt, taking over 1,300 from Brisbane and Sydney at the beginning of October, and 1,400 from Melbourne, Adelaide, and Fremantle in February, 1916. Upon disembarking the second lot, she carried part of the 29th British Division from Suez to Marseilles, and also discharged there a cargo of wheat that she had brought from Australia. By May she was back again in Australian waters, and on the 1st of June, having filled up with troops and cargo at Sydney, Melbourne, and Fremantle, left for England *viâ* The Cape. At the conclusion of this voyage she was taken over by the Admiralty and sent to Liverpool to be converted into a hospital ship.

She next served in the Mediterranean, running between Alexandria, Mudros, Salonica, and Malta. Up to this stage of the war hospital ships proceeded without escort; at night they were brilliantly lit from end to end, the coloured lamps of the red cross standing out boldly. In November the *Warilda* was despatched from Malta to Mudros with five other hospital ships (including the *Wandilla*), carrying sick and wounded to be transferred to the great White Star liner *Britannic* for England. That vessel, however, was mined in the Zea Channel, and the six ships consequently returned to Malta with their sick and wounded.[26]

[25] Capt. W. J. Wyllie. Commanded s.s. *Ulimaroa* since 1908. Master mariner; of Mosman, N.S.W.; b. London, 6 Sept., 1869.

[26] *See also p. 428*

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From Malta the *Warilda* was sent to England, and for the next eighteen months was employed in the hospital ferry service between Le Havre and Southampton. In consequence of Germany's decision to attack *all* vessels found in the Channel, hospital ships working in this area ceased to show the red cross and were at the beginning of 1917 camouflaged and armed, their designation being changed to that of "ambulance-transports."[27] The normal routine was a trip one way each night, except when coaling (which sometimes took several days) and when in dock. In May, 1917, her Australian crew, their articles having expired, returned to Australia; a British crew was signed on (on British articles), and the only Australians thenceforth serving in her were the officers and engineers.

In February, 1918, when fully loaded with wounded, the *Warilda* narrowly missed being sunk. About 2 a.m. the wake of a torpedo was observed close on the starboard side; almost at once she was hit, the torpedo driving in a plate abreast of No. 3 hatch, abaft the bridge, but failing to explode. The submarine was not seen. On the 24th of March the *Warilda* collided off St. Catherine's Head with the *Petit Gaudet*—a French steamer under charter to the British Government. Both were seriously damaged, and the *Petit Gaudet*, in order to save her from foundering, had to be run ashore in St. Helen's Bay.

On the 2nd of August, 1918, the *Warilda*, with 801 on board (crew, about 80; hospital staff, about 60; patients—practically all British "Tommies," but including a few Australians—about 660; and 7 women passengers—among them Mrs. Violet Long, a chief controller of the W.A.A.C.) left Le Havre at 10.15 p.m., escorted by two destroyers, *P 39* and *P 45*.[28] The night was very dark, with a range of visibility of from half to three-quarters of a mile, and for this reason the ships, which were steaming at 14½ knots and showing no lights, were not zigzagging. A light south-easterly breeze was blowing, but the sea was fairly smooth. About 1.30 a.m. the master of the *Warilda* (Captain Sim[29]) left the second officer (F. C. Dunn[30]) on the bridge and went into the chart room. In another five minutes course would be altered to the north-west.

Suddenly the second officer caught a glimpse of a submarine two points on the starboard bow, and about 100 yards distant. It was seen to be making up the Channel on the surface, the broken water having betrayed its presence. Calling out "hard-a-port"—an order which immediately brought the master running to the bridge—he tried to ram it, but, being unable to pull round quickly enough, merely shot across its wake. The helm was then ordered to be put over to starboard, so as to bring the submarine astern of the *Warilda*, but, almost immediately, a torpedo struck the after-part of her engine room and blew a hole through No. 4 bulkhead into "I" ward (the lowest ward in the ship, containing 102 "walking" patients), while the starboard propeller was evidently carried away, and the ship began gradually to go down by the stern. The port engine, however, was still running—"making a noise like some giant sewing machine." Unfortunately it could not be stopped: the engine-room staff on duty[31]

[27] *See plate at p. 421.*

[28] Under Lieutenants J. W. Durnford and J. R. P. Thompson respectively.

[29] Capt. J. Sim, O.B.E. Commanded s.s. *Warilda*, 1914/18. Master mariner; of Cremorne, N.S.W.; b. Richmond, Surrey, Eng., 13 Jan., 1864.

[30] Capt. F. C. Dunn. Of Coogee, N.S.W.; b. Pyrmont, N.S.W., 16 April, 1890.

[31] Under Third Engineer J. Milne (of Southampton, Eng.).

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had been either killed by the explosion or drowned, the engine room had been flooded, and it was found impossible to go below and turn off the steam. As the steering gear had been blown away, the hapless vessel swung round in circles. At fourteen knots it was out of the question to lower the boats into the water, since any attempt to do so would have resulted in their being immediately swamped. It therefore became necessary to wait until she exhausted her steam.

The force of the explosion had caused the masts to spring, in consequence of which the wireless aerials came tumbling down on to the bridge—Captain Sim wondered for some moments what was entwining his shoulders and neck. Within a few minutes communication by Morse lamp had been obtained with the starboard destroyer (*P 39*), which, after dropping eight depth-charges at intervals on a wide circle round the *Warilda*, stood by to give assistance, as did the other destroyer. Possibly through the heavy vibration set up by the bursting of the depth-charges, No. 5 bulkhead, which was holding up the volume of water in the engine room and No. 4 hold, now gave way, and No. 5 hold was immediately flooded. The water had by this time reached the purser's office, which was situated in the after-part of the working alleyway running along the starboard side under the main deck. The purser (E. T. Bartleet[32]), finding that he could not get down from the after end, went along to the fore-part of the ship and, descending there, reached his room and saved the ship's papers.

Meanwhile the patients who could walk were lined up on the promenade deck, along which about 100 leg and splint cases were lying out on mattresses. Thither also from the wards over 300 cot cases, wrapped in blankets, were in five minutes brought by the British medical orderlies and members of the crew, all of whom, as a result of months of constant training, worked with great rapidity and confidence. The electric lighting-system having failed, this work was carried out in the dim light of oil-lamps, which, fixed round the wards and on staircases (as was the rule in all ambulance-transports crossing the Channel), had been lit before the vessel left Le Havre. Under the superintendence of the second officer[33] and the senior medical officer (Major G. W. Milne, R.A.M.C.), most of the cot cases were straightway placed in lifeboats, which had been lowered to the rail of the promenade deck. Among the occupants of one of these boats were the seven women. Captain Sim was strongly impressed with the discipline and cheerfulness shown by the wounded. "I've been a firm admirer of the 'Tommies' ever since," says a New Zealander.

At 2.30 a.m., as the *Warilda*, though still moving at 1½ knots, had now her stern below the water, Captain Sim decided that he could wait no longer, and gave the order to lower the boats. All except two (Nos. 2 and 4) were launched without mishap. In No. 4 Mrs. Long's foot became jammed in the after-block when the boat was about half-way down, and she cried out in pain. On hearing this cry those on board, thinking it was a signal to lower away quicker, worked faster on the ropes. The result was that the forward end of the boat tilted, while the stern refused to budge. The boat upset, pitching its occupants into the water: all but two (one of whom was

[32] E. T. Bartleet, Esq. Of Largs Bay, S. Aust.; b. Semaphore, S. Aust., 9 Sept., 1880.

[33] The chief officer (G. Taylor) was not on board on this voyage.

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Mrs. Long, whose leg had been wrenched away) were saved by the other lifeboats.[34] No. 2 boat was overturned through fouling the mine defence gear, and fourteen were drowned.

After a lapse of some ten minutes, *P 39* came alongside under the port davits, and, by means of life-lines, rope ladders, and a gangway run out from the *Warilda's* deck to the berthing rails at the after-end of the destroyer, the remaining patients and others were transferred to her. *P 45*, which had rescued the occupants of some of the lifeboats, ranged herself alongside *P 39*, took many of the survivors from her, and then, after dropping twelve depth-charges over the area in which the submarine might have submerged and picking up another 150 survivors from lifeboats, made for Southampton. As many of the patients in the lifeboats were badly-wounded cases, the work of rescue was difficult, but it was skilfuly carried through by the British seamen.

Although a wireless message asking for tugboats had been sent to Southampton and a tow line been passed from *P 39* to the *Warilda*, Captain Sim now felt that there was no hope of saving his ship; her stern was right down, and she was inclining at a sharp angle. Accordingly, last of her complement, he and his chief engineer (L. Young[35]) and second officer boarded the destroyer.[36] An attempt then made to tow her had soon to be abandoned; shortly after 4 o'clock her bow shot up in the air, and a few seconds later those on the destroyer knew by the manner in which the bow of the big ship shivered that she had struck the bottom of the Channel. Then gradually she turned over and disappeared.

In addition to the engine-room staff and the sixteen from the capsized lifeboats, all the occupants of "I" ward (102) were lost. On the way into Southampton two destroyers were met and given instructions to look for possible survivors, and farther on a submarine was sighted. The *P 39* altered course at full speed, signalled to her several times without response, and was about to attack when the submarine gave with flares the British signal for the day.

On the 30th of August Captain Sim received the following message:

> Paris newspapers of the 11th inst. publish the following message from Havre, dated 10th inst.:—"News has reached Havre that the German submarine which sank the ambulance ship *Warilda* was herself sunk by a number of British destroyers. The submarine lost a lot of her crew, and the remainder, including the German commander, were captured and taken to England.

As a transport the *Warilda* had carried more than 7,000 troops; as a hospital ship she carried approximately 80,000 patients and made over 180 trips across the English Channel.

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[34] A young V.A.D. worker, thinking an ambulance-transport would be quite safe, had (against regulations) undressed and gone to bed, and, when the vessel was hit, had come up in her nightgown, in which attire she remained. Realising that lifeboat No. 4 was going to capsize, and being a good swimmer, she dived into the sea. Later an officer told Captain Sim that, on seeing an object floating by, he made a grab and pulled up by the hair what, for a moment, he thought was a mermaid! Aboard one of the destroyers she was provided with a man's vest and pants, and appeared none the worse for her immersion.

[35] Chief Engineer L. Young. Marine engineer; of Semaphore, S. Aust., and Sydney; born London, 28 May, 1875.

[36] Captain Sim, when leaving the ship, was almost stunned by falling against a winch. He barely managed to slide down one of the lifeboat falls to the deck of the *P 39*.

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WEAR. Requisitioned at Newcastle (New South Wales) on the 31st of August, 1917, the *Wear* made one trip to Rabaul and another to New Zealand as a collier. She was returned to her owners in December.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA. Built originally at Trieste for the Russian Government (and known as the *Mongolia*), the *Western Australia* was bought from a Danish firm by the Government of Western Australia and employed on the north-west coast of that State. Owing to her unsuitability for this work, she was in July, 1915, sent to England to be sold, but on arrival there was taken over by the Admiralty and converted into a hospital ship, a charter being arranged for the period of the war. Her Australian officers and crew, who returned to the Commonwealth, were replaced by Britishers.

A fast ship, she was from that time onwards continuously used on cross-Channel work, running between Southampton and Le Havre and up the Seine to Rouen. On the 20th of March, 1918 (when, like the *Warilda*, serving as an "ambulance-transport"), she was attacked by a submarine, but fortunately the torpedo missed her. At the end of the war she was sold to foreign owners.

WILLOCHRA. On the 17th of November, 1914, the *Willochra*, then under charter to the Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand, was requisitioned by the Dominion Government, and, after making five voyages from New Zealand to Suez and back,[37] and four round trips (by various routes) from New Zealand to England, was taken over by the British authorities on the 17th of April, 1918. Reaching Suez again from New Zealand, she next visited the east coast of Africa, Durban, Cape Town, West African coast, Cape Town again, and thence Southampton. She was now sent to Rotterdam to bring British prisoners liberated after the Armistice back to England. She was one of the first vessels to be engaged on this work, and left the Dutch port for Hull on the 17th of November. Another Rotterdam-Hull and two Copenhagen-Leith trips were followed by a voyage to New Zealand, at the conclusion of which she was despatched on the 10th of May, 1919, to Rotterdam with the German prisoners who were being repatriated after internment in New Zealand during the war-years. Having embarked other Germans at Sydney, she continued her voyage *viâ* Albany, Cape Town, and Plymouth; and then, after a run to Archangel, left London for New Zealand. She was returned to the Union Company on the 23rd of October.

During her war-service, throughout which she was manned from New Zealand, the numbers carried by the *Willochra* (exclusive of her England-Archangel trip) were: 15,835 New Zealanders, 8,896 Britishers, 900 Australians, 40 Frenchmen, 4 South Africans, 1,000 African natives, and 1,150 German prisoners.

WINFIELD. Taken over at Port Adelaide on the 5th of February, 1918, under Admiralty requisition, the *Winfield* ran with foodstuffs and other cargo between Australia, Africa, the United Kingdom, South America, and the Mediterranean.

WOOLGAR. Requisitioned on the 30th of March, 1916, the *Woolgar* made two voyages from Westport (New Zealand) to Singapore with coal for the British fleet in the East Indies, and two voyages to Western Australia. When returning from Singapore on

[37] *See sketch on p. 414.*

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one of these trips, she brought to Sydney 32 prisoners and a guard of 23. She was given back to her owners on the 15th of January, 1917.

WYREEMA. Requisitioned on the 23rd of September, 1918, the *Wyreema* left Sydney in mid-October, but had only got as far as Cape Town when the Armistice was signed. After returning to the Commonwealth, she conveyed the French General Pau and his staff (who had just concluded an official visit) to the Mediterranean, and then proceeded to Liverpool. Here the crew was struck down with pneumonic influenza—out of a total of 140, all but 4 were admitted to hospital, where 15 died. She came back to Australia *viâ* Salonica, and, after being reconditioned in Sydney, was returned to her owners in September, 1920.

YANKALILLA. Between March and September, 1915, the *Yankalilla* (at this time not equipped with wireless) made two trips with coal from Australia to Valparaiso, returning with bagged oats from Talcahuano; as she was moored between two interned German steamers on one occasion, the loading of the oats was keenly supervised by her officers.

In December she took on wheat at Melbourne, and, proceeding to Durban and Cape Town, received orders to continue to Lisbon, at the same time being warned that a German raider (the *Moewe*) was operating in the North Atlantic. When passing the Canary Islands at night a vessel signalled incessantly to her to stop, but Captain Jolliffe[38] altered course and lost sight of the stranger in a rain squall. From Lisbon the *Yankalilla* went to Glasgow, Liverpool, and London, taking on general cargo at all three ports, and thence to Falmouth. There she loaded explosives, which she carried to Fremantle. Her next trip overseas (with flour) ended at Le Havre, where she was held up for a week in consequence of the activity of enemy submarines. On the voyage trouble occurred among the firemen, necessitating strong disciplinary action on arrival at Le Havre and later at Glasgow.

At the end of 1916, after touching at Devonport (where she sheltered from bad weather), Glasgow, Liverpool, Plymouth (on account of a submarine attack on the Brixham trawlers), London, Holehaven, and Falmouth, she set out for Fremantle *viâ* Land's End and Lundy Island, the southern Irish coast, and The Cape. From Australia she returned with another cargo of flour to Le Havre, and then shipped coal at Barry Dock for Port Said. In the Mediterranean —except for the stage between Bizerta and Malta, when she went in convoy—her practice was to steam by night, making for the nearest port before daylight. From Port Said she went to Calcutta, there loaded a cargo of tea and shellac (8,100 tons, at very high freight) for Seattle, thence with paper from British Columbia to Melbourne (reached in February, 1918), on to Calcutta (with stores for Mesopotamia), back to Melbourne, thence to Vancouver and Ocean Falls (where many of the ship's company went down with pneumonic influenza), and finally back to Sydney in March, 1919.

[38] Capt. F. W. Jolliffe. Master mariner; of Mosman, N.S.W.; b. Deal, Kent, Eng., 12 April, 1876.

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ZEALANDIA. Requisitioned at Sydney in May, 1918, the *Zealandia* was ordered by the Admiralty to New York, where (with the *Katoomba*) she joined the American No. 1 Convoy and made three trips to Liverpool with United States troops. During the second week of August, when she was returning alone to New York and was about two days out from the American coast, a submarine appeared close on her starboard bow. At the time the *Zealandia* was making a zigzagging course, and Captain Bates[39] immediately swung her round to train his guns upon the enemy, but the submarine dived and was not seen again.

Early in October, as the convoy was nearing Holyhead on its way up the Irish Sea, it was dogged by one or two submarines, whose positions were wirelessed at intervals to the transports by scouts working ahead. Except, however, for a false alarm, caused through the explosion of a depth-charge after dark close to the ship, the voyage ended without further incident.

After the Armistice the *Zealandia* brought out to Australia a number of soldiers' wives and children; then took British troops from India to London; and finally returned to the Commonwealth with members of the A.I.F. She was reconditioned at Sydney, and resumed her normal work on the Australian coast in December, 1919. During her war-service she steamed 70,000 miles and carried 8,000 troops and their dependants.

[39] Capt. G. B. Bates. Master mariner; of Newcastle, N.S.W.; b. Newcastle, 31 May, 1878.

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II. EX-ENEMY VESSELS EMPLOYED BY THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT.

Number and Name, Gross Tonnage.	Commanders.	Carried.	Where served.	Remarks.
C 5. Araluen (ex *Scharzfels*) 5513	E. H. Keates H. P. Hildebrand A. Neagle C. Angus G. E. Startup	Cargo	Atlantic, Pacific, Mediterranean; Australia, New Zealand, Europe, Canada, America, South Africa, Egypt	Chased by submarine in N. Atlantic, 3 Sept. 1916; collided with s.s. *Huntsvale*, 15 Nov. 1916; transferred to Commonwealth Government Line, 21 March 1918
A 41. Bakara (ex *Cannstatt*) 5930	J. Buchanan J. N. Beighton	Australian, South African (native), and New Caledonian troops; cargo	Indian and Atlantic Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, Europe, Egypt	Transferred to Commonwealth Government Line, 1 May 1918
A 37. Barambah (ex *Hobart*) 5923	S. A. Anning A. Grove J. Buchanan R. A. T. Wilson	Australian and British troops; cargo	Indian and Atlantic Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, Europe, Egypt	Transferred to Commonwealth Government Line, 23 May 1918
A 43. Barunga (ex *Sumatra*) 7484	T. E. Cutler J. N. Beighton J. Avern A. S. Morton J. K. Davis G. E. A. Richardson R. A. T. Wilson	Australian and Nigerian troops; cargo	Indian and Atlantic Oceans, Mediterranean, English Channel; Australia, Europe, Egypt, E. and W. Africa	Collided with (1) s.s. *Lucellum*, Dec. 1916; (2) dock entrance at Cardiff, 8 Jan. 1917; (3) s.s. *Theodoros Pangalos*, 22 Feb. 1917. Transferred to Commonwealth Government Line, 11 March 1918. Attacked by submarines: (1) in English Channel, 7 July 1918—torpedo missed ship; (2) in N. Atlantic (150 miles W. by S. ½ S. from Bishop Rock, Scilly Is.), 15 July 1918—torpedoed and sunk

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A 36. Boonah (ex *Melbourne*) 5926	J. K. Davis G. E. A. Richardson A. S. Johnson	Australian, South African, and Nigerian troops; cargo	Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, Europe, America, Egypt, E. and W. Africa	Attacked by submarines: (1) in Mediterranean, Oct. 1915—escaped through own speed; (2) off W. coast of Ireland, 10 March 1917—saved by own gun; (3) S. from Tuskar lighthouse, Wexford, Ireland, 23 July 1918—torpedo missed ship. Transferred to Commonwealth Government Line, 28 March 1918
C 7. Booral (ex *Oberhausen*) 4322	J. Avern A. V. Richardson	Cargo	Indian, Atlantic, and Pacific Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, Europe, America, New Zealand, Canada	Transferred to Commonwealth Government Line, 15 April 1918
A 42. Boorara (ex *Pfalz*) 6570	J. C. Plunkett J. S. Macphail A. A. Burns J. K. Davis J. Buchanan	Australian, British, and Turkish troops; cargo	Indian and Atlantic Oceans, Mediterranean, North Sea, English Channel; Australia, Europe, Egypt, Mudros, Africa	Collided with (1) French armoured-cruiser *Kléber*, 18 July 1915; (2) s.s. *Abbassieh*, 27 June 1917; (3) s.s. *Adria*, 1 Aug. 1917. Attacked by submarines: (1) in English Channel (off Beachy Head), 20 March 1918—torpedoed, but reached Southampton; (2) in North Sea (off Whitby), 23 July 1918—torpedoed, but reached the Tyne. Transferred to Commonwealth Government Line, 24 June, 1919
N 1. Bulga (ex *Signal*) 1449	G. E. A. Richardson O. Manning R. C. D. Moodie-Heddle A. R. Pascall A. A. Walden J. Bartlett D. Morgan R. Newing R. Innes	Cargo	Australian coast	
A 45. Bulla (ex *Hessen*) 5099	R. A. T. Wilson A. R. Pascall	Australian and Indian troops; cargo	Indian and Atlantic Oceans, Mediterranean: Australia, Egypt, Gallipoli Peninsula, Europe	Collided with Folkestone light-vessel, March 1917. Transferred to Commonwealth Government Line, 15 April 1918.

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EX-ENEMY VESSELS EMPLOYED BY THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT—*continued.*

Number and Name, Gross Tonnage.	Commanders.	Carried.	Where served.	Remarks.
C 9. Calulu (ex *Osnabrück*) 4240	J. C. Plunkett G. Barnes	Cargo	Indian, Atlantic, and Pacific Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, Europe, West Africa, America	Transferred to Commonwealth Government Line, 14 March 1918
C 1. Carawa (ex *Turul*) 3530	S. H. Drew C. M. Rowley A. S. Johnson J. H. Hyde	Cargo	Indian, Pacific, and Atlantic Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, New Zealand, Europe, Egypt, Ocean Island, Singapore	Transferred to Commonwealth Government Line, 4 March 1918. Wrecked off Galapagos Is., March 1920
C 10. Carina (ex *Greifswald*) 5486	W. H. Steele D. J. Watson E. G. Clutterbuck R. C. D. Moodie-Heddle	Cargo	Atlantic and Indian Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, Europe, Egypt	Struck submerged object in Straits of Gibraltar, June 1916. Transferred to Commonwealth Government Line, 29 April 1918
C 8. Conargo (ex *Altona*) 4312	W. G. Snadden A. R. Pascall R. C. D. Moodie-Heddle E. G. Clutterbuck	Cargo	Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, Europe, America, Egypt, India, West Africa	Transferred to Commonwealth Government Line, 12 March 1918. Torpedoed and sunk in Irish Sea (12 miles W. by N. from the Calf of Man), 31 March 1918
C 3. Cooee (ex *Neumünster*) 4424	W. MacGowan W. F. Lewis A. A. Walden R. McKenzie	Cargo	Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, Europe, America, Egypt, Burma, West Africa	Transferred to Commonwealth Government Line, 12 April 1918

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C 4. Dongarra (ex *Stolzenfels*) 5553	J. McKay T. A. de Carteret R. McKenzie W. F. Lewis P. J. Elsey	Cargo	Indian, Pacific, and Atlantic Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, Europe, America, South Africa	Transferred to Commonwealth Government Line, 20 April 1918
C 11. Gilgai (ex *Wildenfels*) 5512	T. Moore W. MacGowan J. Buchanan H. C. C. Mills	Cargo	Indian, Atlantic, and Pacific Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, Europe, America, Newfoundland, West Africa, India	Transferred to Commonwealth Government Line, 1 May 1918
C 6. Parattah (ex *Berlin*) 4196	A. W. Webster E. J. M. Appleyard G. Barnes C. M. Rowley W. R. Chaplin	Cargo	Indian, Atlantic, and Pacific Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, New Zealand, Europe, America, West Africa	Chased by submarine in N. Atlantic, 11 Aug. 1917. Transferred to Commonwealth Government Line, 16 March 1918
C 12. Talawa (ex *Wotan*) 3834	J. N. Beighton G. Barnes R. A. T. Wilson	Cargo	Indian, Pacific, and Atlantic Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, Europe, America, Africa	Torpedoed in Mediterranean (off N. Italy), 5 May 1917, but reached Alassio. Transferred to Commonwealth Government Line, 4 July 1918
C 2. Toromeo (ex *Tiberius*) 4149	J. McKay T. A. de Carteret D. S. Brown A. C. Reed A. C. Read A. A. Burns	Cargo	Indian, Pacific, and Atlantic Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, Europe, America	Struck submerged wreck in English Channel, 20 Feb. 1917; collided with a vessel in The Downs, 22 Feb. 1917. Transferred to Commonwealth Government Line, 15 April 1918. Attacked by submarine in English Channel, 1 May 1918—torpedo missed ship

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Note.—The remainder of the ex-enemy vessels captured in Australian waters were, during the war, either released under charter to private firms or lent to other Governments, as shown in the following list. As regards those released to private firms, the Commonwealth Government, when necessary, insisted that they must be used in carrying cargoes urgently required by the Allies. For this reason they are included here.

Number and Name, Gross Tonnage.	Commanders.	Carried.	Where served.	Remarks.
N 2. Bambra (ex *Prinz Sigismund*) 3302	W. K. Saunders	Passengers and mails	Between Fremantle and Port Darwin	Chartered to W. Aust. Govt., May 1915. Grounded between Derby and Wyndham, 8 Aug. 1916, and refloated after 24 hours
C 13. Burrowa (ex *Carl Rudgert Vinnen*) 2902	R. J. Gillespie	Cargo	Indian and Atlantic Oceans; Australia, Europe, Mauritius	Chartered in May 1915 to Scott, Fell & Co., Sydney. Captured by submarine 60 miles W. from Scilly Is., and sunk by bombs, 27 April 1917
C 16. Canowie (ex *Ernst*) 2285	J. W. Holdcroft	Cargo	Pacific and Atlantic Oceans; Australia, South America, Europe	Chartered in May 1915 to Scott, Fell & Co., Sydney. Wrecked on Chiloe Is., Chile, 9 Oct. 1916
C 14. Cardinia (ex *Olinda*) 1915	T. Carmichael	Cargo	Indian, Atlantic, and Pacific Oceans; Australia, Europe, South America, Mauritius	Chartered in May 1915 to Scott, Fell & Co., Sydney. Wrecked off Mumbualah Is., Fiji, Sept. 1921
— *Carrabin* (ex *Susanne Vinnen*) 2739	P. J. Mathieson — Gransbury	Cargo	Indian and Atlantic Oceans; Australia, Europe	Chartered in Sept. 1915 to W.A. State Sawmills. Torpedoed and sunk 10 miles S. from Daunt's Rock, Ireland, 1 Oct. 1917.
C 15. Cooroy (ex *Athene*) 2470	J. Rees — Arthur	Cargo	Pacific and Atlantic Oceans; Australia, America, Europe	Chartered in May 1915 to Scott, Fell & Co., Sydney. Captured by submarine 10 miles S. by W. ½ W. from Hook Point, Waterford, Ireland, 29 Aug. 1917, and sunk by torpedo
— *Mawatta* (ex *Germania*) 1096	.. ..	Cargo	Australia and Pacific Islands	Chartered in 1915 to Burns, Philp & Co., Sydney
H 1. Moora (ex *Thüringen*) 4994	.. ..	Indian troops	Indian and Atlantic Oceans, Mediterranean; India, Europe	Lent to Government of India, 1915
H 2. Moorina (ex *Lothringen*) 5002	.. ..	Indian troops	Indian and Atlantic Oceans, Mediterranean; India, Europe	Lent to Government of India, 1915. Captured by submarine in Mediterranean (105 miles S. from Cape Martello, Crete), 5 Nov. 1915, and sunk by gun-fire

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ARALUEN. Formerly the Hansa liner *Scharzfels* of Bremen, captured at Port Adelaide at the outbreak of war. It being decided to utilise her as a cargo carrier, she loaded wool, preserved meat, and other merchandise at Sydney and Melbourne and (known as the *C 5*) left at the end of December for London, which was reached on the 6th of March, after delay at Cape Town caused by a fire in her bunkers. Renamed *Araluen*, she returned to Australia by way of the Panama Canal and San Francisco, where she picked up a cargo of hay. During the next three years she carried concentrates from Australia to the United Kingdom, for the Ministry of Munitions; wheat and flour from Australia and Canada to France and England; case oil from New York to Australia; coal from Wales to Italy (being requisitioned by the Admiralty for the purpose); general merchandise from Italy to Egypt, and from Montreal, New York, and Italy to Australia; and, on one occasion, mails from Australia to England. On the 21st of March, 1918, she was transferred from the Navy Department to the Commonwealth Government Line.

On the 3rd of September, 1916, while *en route* from Cardiff to Montreal, she was chased at night by a submarine. In the following November, while loading at Montreal, she was damaged by collision with the *Huntsvale*, an ex-enemy steamer trading under the auspices of the Admiralty. In June, 1918, she acted as flagship of a convoy of eleven ships from Plymouth to the United States. The usual zigzag course was steered, and, although the convoy received several warnings of submarines, it was not attacked.

BAKARA. Formerly the German-Australian liner *Cannstatt* of Hamburg, captured at Brisbane at the outbreak of war. As a transport of the Second Convoy, she left Melbourne with troops and horses on the 21st of December, but arrived in King George's Sound with her bunkers on fire, and had to go alongside the pier in the inner harbour. Although the fire was subdued by the evening of the 29th and the task of discharging the coal was immediately taken in hand, she was unable to leave with the convoy, but, coming on by herself, reached Suez on the 29th of January, a day behind the others.

On the 21st of May, 1915, she left Newcastle with more troops and horses for Egypt and cargo for the United Kingdom, returning with 1,500 tons of frozen beef for Genoa and 3,000 tons of general merchandise for Melbourne and Sydney. During the remainder of the war, she carried—besides troops, horses, and government stores[40]—meat, fruit, wheat, concentrates, and general cargo from Australia to the United Kingdom; wool, skins, etc., from Australia to Marseilles; meat and coal, as well as railway waggons for the Egyptian Expeditionary Force, from England to Port Said; and general merchandise and live stock from England to Australia.

From August, 1917, she joined escorted convoys when in the danger zones; in September of that year she was fitted in England with mine defence apparatus, some of her officers going through a course of training in its use. In May, 1918, after being transferred to the Commonwealth Government Line, she embarked at Plymouth a full complement of native troops for return to South Africa, as well as some fifty New Caledonians for passage to Sydney on their way to Noumea.

[40] In May 1917 her troop fittings were removed in Australia, and for a time she was used simply as a cargo carrier.

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BAMBRA. Formerly the Norddeutscher-Lloyd's *Prinz Sigismund* of Bremen, captured at Brisbane at the outbreak of war after coming from Japan. Considered unsuitable either as a transport or a cargo carrier for Navy Department purposes, she was lent in May, 1915, for the period of the war, to the West Australian Government to replace the *Western Australia*,[41] which was sent to England. Thenceforth (first known as the *N 2* and later as the *Bambra*) she ran with passengers, mails, and cargo between Fremantle and Port Darwin and intermediate ports. On the 8th of August, 1916, she grounded on a reef between Derby and Wyndham, and was fast for twenty-four hours, badly damaging her bottom; after being refloated, she continued her voyage to Wyndham and Darwin, and was then sent to Singapore for repairs. Thereafter the only unusual incident in her service was a fire which occurred in her bunkers when near Geraldton, and which took four days to extinguish.

BARAMBAH. Formerly the German-Australian liner *Hobart* of Hamburg, captured at Port Phillip Heads on the 11th of August, 1914.[42] She left Newcastle with troops and horses on the 20th of December as a transport of the Second Convoy, joined the fleet at Albany, and sailed with it to Egypt *viâ* Colombo, thereafter proceeding to England with her cargo of meat and other goods. In July and December, 1915,[43] and again in June, 1916, she left Australia with reinforcements and cargoes of wool, meat, ore, lead, and other merchandise. On the 23rd of December, 1916, after filling up with wool and jam, she left Hobart for London, *viâ* The Cape. On arrival at Plymouth on the 3rd of March she was—at the request of the War Office, which was vitally interested in her wool cargo—diverted to Liverpool, whence the wool could be quickly despatched to the Yorkshire mills. She was then fitted up for the conveyance of invalids to Australia, and on the 8th of April sailed from Plymouth with 900 hammock cases, besides 3,700 tons of cargo. During her next visit to England she was dazzle-painted and fitted with mine defence gear; and in August, 1918, after having made yet another voyage from the Commonwealth to the United Kingdom with foodstuffs only, she again carried 900 troops overseas.

BARUNGA. Formerly the German-Australian liner *Sumatra* of Hamburg, captured at Sydney at the outbreak of war. On the 21st of December, after embarking troops and horses, she left Melbourne for Albany to join the other ships of the Second Convoy. On the morning of the convoy's departure, however, she developed engine trouble and had to be left behind for repairs. She continued her voyage later. From Egypt she went to England, where on the 1st of April, 1915, she was temporarily handed over to the Admiralty for cross-Channel work.[44] At the beginning of November she left Liverpool with meat for the French Forces in the Ægean and with Admiralty stores.

In April, 1916, she again carried troops and horses from the Commonwealth to Egypt; after proceeding to London,[45] she returned (with wheat) to Naples, and thence to Australia in ballast. Then,

[41] *See p. 499.*

[42] *See p. 381.*

[43] On this voyage the *Barambah* carried from Port Said to Malta the spare stores and gear of the lost *AE 1* which had been sent from Australia in the *Ajana*.

[44] For a time the *Barunga* was used as a frozen-meat dépôt ship at Le Havre.

[45] Her fruit cargo turned out in excellent condition.

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after two years' voyaging without enemy interference,[46] during which time she carried native troops from Sierra Leone to Kilwa Kisiwani on the East African coast, she left London on the 6th of July, 1918, for Plymouth, whence she was to carry back to Australia a number of invalided troops. A narrative of her loss on the 15th of July, and of the gallant conduct which marked the incident, is given on *pp. 422-4.*

BOONAH. Formerly the German-Australian liner *Melbourne* of Hamburg, captured at Sydney at the outbreak of war. Fitted as a transport for the Second Convoy, she sailed from Newcastle on the 18th of December with 110 troops and 465 horses, and from Albany on the 31st. By February, 1917, she had made three more trips with troops from Australia to Egypt and England, and had visited Glasgow, Naples, Genoa, Marseilles, Salonica (being chased by a submarine *en route*), Port Said, Galveston, Pensacola, and New York with or for cargo.[47]

On the 10th of March, 1917, when bound for Dakar, she sank a German submarine off Erris Head on the west coast of Ireland. About 6 o'clock that evening, as he was leaving the bridge, the master (Captain Johnson[48]) observed over his shoulder a faint puff of steam or vapour on the ship's port quarter. Deciding to take no risk, he gave the order to put the helm hard-a-port, so as to bring the phenomenon right astern; then, perceiving it to be a half-submerged submarine, he signalled for the 4.7-inch gun, which was mounted aft, to open fire. At this time the *Boonah* was travelling at a little over ten knots, but the submarine, doing 12-15, began to gain on her. The first shot from the *Boonah's* gun landed short by some 300 yards, the second by 150; the third, however, seemed to hit the submarine, a shower of sparks flying upwards as the shell exploded. The *Boonah* then continued on her original course, but her crew was surprised some minutes later when the submarine appeared on her starboard beam. Again opening fire, with her second shell she struck the water close beside the submarine; the third appeared to burst on the conning tower, and was followed by a bright flash and a dense cloud of smoke. The enemy was not seen again.

Resuming her voyage, the *Boonah* was sent from Dakar to Lagos, and there embarked 2,000 Nigerian troops for Dar-es-Salaam.[49] On the way, however, an epidemic of chicken pox broke out on board, and the vessel was detained in quarantine on arrival. She then returned to Australia by way of Zanzibar and Mauritius.

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[46] Not, however, without incident. In December 1916 the *Barunga* collided with the *Lucellum* at Genoa, receiving little damage. On 7 January, 1917, while coming to anchor in Barry Roads, she lost her port anchor and cable and nearly lost those on her starboard side as well. Next day when attempting to dock at Cardiff in an easterly gale, one of the tugs in attendance cast off without orders, with the result that the *Barunga's* port bow struck the dock entrance heavily and was damaged to a considerable extent. When leaving Cardiff for Sierra Leone five weeks later, she collided with an outward bound Greek steamer, the *Theodoros Pangalos,* which was so badly damaged that it had to return to port.

[47] After leaving Cape Town on 26 November, 1916, the *Boonah* had to put back in consequence of trouble with some of the stokehold hands, who were replaced by naval stokers.

[48] Capt. A. S. Johnsen. Commanded s.s. *Boonah,* 1916/19. Master mariner; of Portland, Vic.; b. Meredith, Vic., 14 Aug., 1887.

[49] The *Barunga* and *Kyarra* were also engaged in this work. The *Barambah,* carrying invalids from England to Australia, proceeded with the convoy to Cape Town.

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Her next encounter with a submarine occurred on the 23rd of July, 1918, south of the Tuskar Rock (Ireland), when, full of troops on a voyage back to Australia, she was being escorted by the auxiliary cruiser *Marmora* and two destroyers. At about 2 p.m. the captain observed a large irregular patch on the water some 700-800 yards distant on the *Boonah's* starboard bow, and saw a torpedo approaching. The helm was immediately put hard over to port, and the torpedo passed a few feet ahead of her; unfortunately it struck the *Marmora*, which had been steaming close to the *Boonah's* port beam and had not seen it in time. A great hole was torn amidships, and the *Marmora* immediately started to go down by the head, and sank in half-an-hour, the *Boonah* being told to "clear out" after standing by for a while.

The voyage was completed without further incident except a false alarm, when, during the passage by night through a specially dangerous area, one of the men on guard woke the ship by accidentally overturning a deck piano.

The *Boonah* was on her fourteenth trip to England (having on this occasion embarked 900 troops at Brisbane and Fremantle) when the Armistice was signed, and she was turned back at Durban. On the voyage home influenza broke out in the ship, 13 cases out of 400 proving fatal.

BOOKAL. Formerly the German-Australian liner *Oberhausen* of Hamburg, captured at Port Huon (Tasmania) at the outbreak of war and brought to Hobart. Employed by the Navy Department as a cargo carrier, she arrived at London in April, 1915, with her first war-cargo, part of which was discharged there and the remainder at Liverpool. Then, sailing in ballast for San Francisco, she loaded hay for the Victorian Government. Her next voyage oversea took her to Genoa and Marseilles, but, owing to the congested state of those ports, she was detained nearly four weeks at the former and seven at the latter; and it was not until February, 1916, that she was on her way back to the Commonwealth, having picked up at Genoa 4,150 tons of merchandise for Sydney and Melbourne. Thereafter during the war years she ran—with wool, wheat, concentrates, coal, hides, case oil, paper, and general cargo—between Australian and South African ports, Naples, Savona, Bordeaux, Le Havre, London, Swansea, Barry, Dakar, Montreal, New York, and Auckland. In April, 1918, she came under the control of the Commonwealth Government Line.

BOORARA. Formerly the Norddeutscher Lloyd's *Pfalz* of Bremen, captured at Port Phillip Heads on the 5th of August, 1914.[50] After being fitted as a transport, she left Sydney on the 21st of December carrying 114 troops and 387 horses, and, joining the Second Convoy at Albany, landed them in Egypt and went on to London with her cargo. Instead of returning to Australia, however, she was temporarily taken over by the Admiralty for cross-Channel work and later sent to the Mediterranean to run as a storeship between Alexandria and Mudros. Shortly after midnight on the 17th of July, 1915, the master (Captain Macphail[51]) had shaped his course to pass to the east of Skyros Island, when a shout from the officer on the bridge brought him from his chart. The first thing he observed was a large vessel, without lights, bearing down upon him at great speed on the

[50] *See p. 45 and Appendix No. 11.*

[51] Capt. J. S. Macphail. Commanded s.s. *Boorara*, 1914/15. Master mariner; of Gladesville, N.S.W.; b. Oban, Argyllshire, Scotland, 5 Sept., 1875.

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starboard side, and, before anything could be done to avoid a collision, the *Boorara* was struck between Nos. 5 and 6 hatches aft. All hands were immediately ordered to stations, and Captain Macphail requested the stranger—which turned out to be the French armoured-cruiser *Kléber*—not to back out until the Turkish prisoners and their guards (whom he was carrying to Egypt) and portion of the crew had clambered aboard her. Numbers 5 and 6 holds were rapidly filling with water, the influx being beyond the control of the pumps. In the meantime H.M.S's *Doris* and *Fauvette* stood by, and, as the *Boorara* appeared to be settling down, the remaining hands left her. However, as she did not sink within half-an-hour, the master and those of the crew who had boarded the *Doris* returned to the ship, which, under her own steam, arrived in Mudros Harbour about 2 p.m. One steward was missing.

After temporary repairs had been effected, she was docked at Naples for several months, and in May, 1916, left for Australia with a cargo of sulphur from Sicily.[52] In mid-August she embarked 1,100 troops at Brisbane and Sydney for England, and lifted wheat and other cargo for Bordeaux and London respectively. At Bordeaux the congestion of shipping was so great that she had to wait thirty days before a berth could be provided for her. On her outward journey she was utilised by the Admiralty to carry to Durban a full complement of British troops destined for India or Mesopotamia; and in May of the following year she took 1,000 troops from Melbourne to Egypt, going thence under escort (zigzagging the whole way) to Malta and Marseilles with wheat and wool. Leaving Marseilles on the 19th of July, she picked up cargo for Australia at several Italian ports and at Colombo,[53] and in December sailed from Sydney for the United Kingdom, *viâ* Panama, with frozen rabbits, butter, flour, wool, and metals.

At 11.45 a.m. on the 20th of March, 1918, while making a zigzag course down the English Channel to Plymouth, where she was to embark passengers for Australia and join a convoy, she was attacked off Beachy Head lighthouse by a submarine, whose torpedo blew a hole 40 by 22 feet in her port side abreast of the funnel.[54] The engine room was immediately flooded and the engines stopped working. Five men were lost; the fourth engineer escaped through being floated up the ladder by the inrush of water. Wireless warnings were sent out; and, after roughly ascertaining the damage, the master (Captain Buchanan) considered that it might be possible to tow the ship into Portsmouth instead of beaching her on the exposed coast (which would mean the loss of his ship and cargo). He therefore ordered the engineers, firemen, and certain other hands not required in connection with the towing to put off in boats to two trawlers (mine-sweepers) which were now coming to her assistance, and which, after he had visited them, readily agreed to undertake the tow. By 1 p.m. five trawlers were towing, and at 3 o'clock a tug arrived. Constant soundings indicated that, although the water was gaining fast in No. 3 hold and slowly in Nos. 4 and 5, very little was appearing in Nos.

[52] While the sulphur was being loaded, a fire broke out in one of the holds, but was extinguished.

[53] During this voyage the *Boorara* met with a series of accidents, the chief being collisions with the transport *Abbassieh* outside Alexandria and with the Italian steamer *Adria* at Civitavecchia.

[54] *See plate at p. 420.*

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1, 2, and 6. At 8 p.m. a naval officer boarded the ship and suggested that, if possible, she should be taken to Southampton, to which Captain Buchanan agreed; but, a thick fog setting in off The Nab, she twice ran aground, and it was not till 8 a.m. on the 22nd that she was beached off Netley.

The cargo was then discharged, and the ship, temporarily patched up, was ordered to the Tyne for full repairs. Towed by a couple of tugs, she left Southampton on the 17th of July and next morning picked up a trawler-escort in St. Helen's Roads. Lookouts were posted in the crow's nest, on the upper and lower bridges, and at the stern, but the vessel would be a sure target for any submarine that might sight her. After anchoring for three nights in Yarmouth Roads through unsettled weather, she put out again on the 22nd. When off Whitby at 1 p.m. on the 23rd the track of a torpedo was sighted by several members of the crew. Before they could report, it struck her in the same spot as the previous torpedo. The explosion buckled the ship badly, but the tugs were signalled to continue towing and work in towards the Tees. Two hours later, however, as the bulkheads were holding out and as she was making little or no water, Captain Buchanan decided to go to the Tyne as ordered. After a tedious journey, throughout which her officers and crew worked unsparingly and the tug-boats responded to every signal, she arrived off the Tyne at 8.30 p.m., mooring two hours later at the first section of buoys. Next day, when she went into dry dock, it was seen that the ship had nearly broken in two, and that both main and auxiliary engines were completely wrecked.

It was July, 1919, before her new engines had been installed and repairs effected, and she then returned to the Commonwealth with Australian troops.

BULGA. Formerly the German steamer *Signal*, captured at Brisbane on the 23rd of August, 1914, after a voyage from Ocean Island with a cargo of phosphates. She was at first utilised by the Navy Department as a fleet collier, and later as a cargo carrier mainly in connection with the smelting business; in the latter rôle she took shipments of lead, spelter, concentrates, etc., from Port Pirie to Melbourne and Sydney for transhipment to oversea vessels, returning thither with coke and coal from Port Kembla and Newcastle. Up to the middle of 1915 she was known as the *N 1*, being then renamed *Bulga*.

BULLA. Formerly the Norddeutscher Lloyd's *Hessen* of Bremen, captured at Sydney on the 3rd of September, 1914. Loading at Port Pirie 2,000 tons of zinc concentrates, she returned to Melbourne, embarked 100 troops and 400 horses, and sailed on the 2nd of February, 1915, for Egypt. Disembarking her troops and horses at Suez, she came under Admiralty control on the 11th of March and proceeded to Alexandria to embark the 26th Indian Mountain Battery, which she landed at Anzac on the 25th of April.[55] Then, after supplying various transports with fresh water, of which her ballast tanks were full, she was utilised as a hospital ship for horses and mules. Although anchored most of the time in Kephalos Harbour (Imbros), at short intervals she crossed to the Peninsula, where she embarked wounded

[55] *See Vol. I, pp. 228, 243, 314-5, 362, 393,* and maps in that volume at *pp. 247, 250.*

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animals. One one occasion an enemy airman attempted to bomb her and another ship that she was watering, but the two missiles that he sent down fell about fifteen yards astern.[56]

At the end of two months she was sent to Alexandria, and, after landing the animals, proceeded to London, where she discharged the zinc concentrates. Then, having been released from Admiralty control, she came back (as the *Bulla*) to Australia, *viâ* South Africa, bringing 4,350 tons of rails and fishplates mainly for the Victorian Government. In November she left again with more troops and horses for Suez and cargo for London and Liverpool; an offer of fifteen shillings per ton extra freight for delivery of her concentrates at Rotterdam instead of London was refused by the Commonwealth Shipping Representative after he had referred the matter to the Admiralty.

After two further voyages from the Commonwealth with troops and cargo, she was requisitioned by the Admiralty in March, 1917, to take a shipment of coal fom Wales to Genoa.[57] She then returned to Australia with merchandise from Genoa, Palermo, and Messina, bringing home from Egypt the R.A.N. Bridging Train, and until the end of the war continued to run with cargo between Australia, United Kingdom, and the Continent.

BURROWA. Formerly the German barque *Carl Rudgert Vinnen* of Bremen, captured at Newcastle at the outbreak of war. Chartered by the Commonwealth in May, 1915, to Scott, Fell, & Company of Sydney, she sailed (as *C 13*) at the beginning of July with cargo for Liverpool. Renamed the *Burrowa*, she returned to Sydney *viâ* Mauritius, and in November, 1916, sailed with wheat which she discharged at Bordeaux in February, 1917. On the 27th of April, 1917, she was captured by a submarine sixty miles west from the Scilly Isles and sunk by bombs. The crew landed at Penzance.

CALULU. Formerly the German-Australian liner *Osnabrück* of Hamburg, captured at Sydney at the outbreak of war. Employed by the Navy Department as a cargo carrier (first known as the *C 9* and later renamed *Calulu*), she arrived in London on the 13th of May, 1915, and, after discharging part of her cargo, took the remainder to Liverpool. She then returned to Australia *viâ* the Panama Canal, San Francisco, and Tacoma; and on the 17th of February, 1916, sailed from Albany with a cargo of wheat. As the port of discharge had not by then been decided upon by the Wheat Committee, her master was instructed to proceed to Las Palmas for further orders, and on arrival was sent to Castellammare (Italy). The vessel afterwards loaded 5,000 tons of sulphur at Licata (Sicily), leaving on the 6th of May for Adelaide and Melbourne. During the second week of November she sailed from Adelaide with flour, wool, and skins for Genoa, it being arranged that on the return voyage she would load sugar in Javanese ports. However, as the Dutch authorities at Sabang had recently refused to bunker an ex-enemy vessel employed by the Admiralty, she was diverted to Australia *en route*.

[56] During this period her second officer (A. S. Johnson, who afterwards commanded the *Boonah*) took charge of a mine-sweeper and was employed in and around the Dardanelles for some weeks.

[57] She had berthed in the East India Dock (London) on 12 March, being fourteen days out from Gibraltar. The delay in her arrival was due to the prolonged route which she had been ordered to follow and to thick and stormy weather. On the way in to London, she collided with the Folkestone light-vessel in a dense fog at night, the light-vessel suffering considerable damage.

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For the remainder of the war she carried concentrates and other cargo from Australia to the United Kingdom, and, on return voyages, coal from Wales to Dakar, and case oil from New York to Australia. In March, 1918, in view of the urgent need for wheat in Great Britain, she was lent to the Ministry of Shipping to bring a cargo across the Atlantic.

CANOWIE. Formerly the German barque *Ernst*, captured in Port Jackson on the 11th of November, 1914. Chartered from the Commonwealth Government in May, 1915, by Scott, Fell, & Company of Sydney, she sailed during the following month from Newcastle with coal for the west coast of South America, proceeding thence with cargo to Liverpool. On the 9th of October, 1916, while on passage with 3,400 tons of coal from Port Talbot (Wales) to Megillones, she was wrecked on Piriulil Point, Chiloe Island, off the Chilean coast, two lives being lost.

CARAWA. Formerly the Austrian steamer *Turul* of Fiume, captured at Sydney on the 7th of August, 1914. Employed first by the Navy Department as a cargo carrier, she was on the 4th of March, 1918, transferred to the Commonwealth Government Line. Included among her war-cargoes were wheat and flour from South Australia to Lisbon and Le Havre; pyrites from Lisbon to Australia; phosphates from Egypt to New Zealand and from Ocean Island to Australia; coal from Wales to Port Said (at £10 per ton freight); salt from Port Said to Singapore; and timber from Fremantle to Adelaide and Melbourne. For several years she carried neither gun nor wireless, and, as her speed was only eight knots, her crew had an anxious time in the danger zones. She survived the war, but was lost in 1920 through striking a reef in the Galapagos.

CARDINIA. Formerly the German sailing vessel *Olinda* of Hamburg, captured at Newcastle at the outbreak of war. She was chartered by the Commonwealth Government in May, 1915, to Scott, Fell, & Company of Sydney. Her war-cargoes included coal from Newcastle to Mauritius and the west coast of South America, and nitrate of soda (for the Ministry of Munitions) from Antofagasta to the United Kingdom. In September, 1921, she was wrecked on a reef off Mumbualah Island, Fiji.

CARINA. Formerly the Norddeutscher Lloyd steamer *Greifswald* of Bremen, captured at Fremantle on the 6th of August, 1914. After being employed by the Navy Department as a cargo carrier (first known as the *C 10* and later as the *Carina*), she was in April, 1918, transferred to the Commonwealth Government Line.

Early in 1915 she left Australia for Italy and the United Kingdom with a cargo consisting mainly of wool and concentrates. German authorities in neutral ports were always on the watch for any vessels which had been captured from Germany, and it was known that, if the opportunity arose, efforts would be made to seize them, or else to prevent them from obtaining supplies or using docks. Upon the *Carina* reaching Genoa before Italy had entered the war, the local marine superintendent of the Norddeutscher Lloyd Company recognised her at once, and boarded the ship to seek information as to where she had come from and her destination. His efforts at interference were, however, fruitless.

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Reaching London on the 11th of May, she transhipped her Liverpool cargo into the *Calulu* and proceeded to Middlesborough for 6,705 tons of rails for the Australian transcontinental railway. Upon arrival in Australia she loaded wheat for the neutral port of Barcelona, but the Admiralty, believing that attempts would again be made to interfere with her, diverted her to Le Havre, which she reached on the 23rd of April.[58] In the following month she discharged at Cherbourg 1,400 tons of wheat and flour which she had transhipped from the *Wiltshire* in London, and, this done, she next sailed for Australia on the 24th of June, taking a cargo of coal from Cardiff (where she suffered a slight collision) to Port Said. While proceeding through the Straits of Gibraltar, she struck a submerged object about seven miles west of Tarifa Point, and began to leak badly. This accident necessitated her spending nearly three weeks at Gibraltar while repairs were effected, and it was mid-September before she reached Australia. After arrival, she was for some time engaged in the coastal trade.

CARRABIN. Formerly the German barque *Susanne Vinnen* of Bremen, captured at Newcastle at the outbreak of war, after having loaded a cargo of coal. In September, 1915, she was chartered from the Commonwealth Government to the Western Australian State Sawmills, and, with timber from Fremantle and Bunbury, sailed for London at the end of December. After returning with oil in March, 1917, she left Bunbury on the 3rd of June for London direct, again carrying timber. On the 30th of September the Fastnet Rock was sighted and course then shaped up the coast for Queenstown, a patrol boat at 1.30 p.m. joining her as escort. Next morning at 8.50 a.m., when ten miles south from Daunt's Rock, she was without warning struck by a torpedo on the starboard quarter, a tremendous hole being torn in her counter and the starboard boats blown out of the davits. The crew, who had only a minute and a half to get away before she foundered, were picked up some twenty minutes later by the patrol boat, which had cruised around and dropped some depth-charges. No lives were lost, one man, who had been blown overboard by the explosion, being rescued by the patrol boat.

CONARGO. Formerly the German-Australian liner *Altona* of Hamburg, captured in Port Phillip Bay on the 21st of August, 1914. Employed by the Navy Department as cargo carrier *C 8* (later renamed *Conargo*), she arrived in England early in 1915 with her first war-cargo, and on the 1st of May proceeded in ballast to New York to load general cargo for Australasian ports. In the following October, when on an outward voyage from Newcastle (N.S.W.), she arrived at Panama to find the Canal closed to traffic in consequence of landslides, and was forced to turn round on the 3rd of November and proceed *viâ* Cape Horn (steaming part of the way in company with the *Toromeo*, which had the same experience). Owing to a damaged propeller, her speed was much reduced, and it was the 2nd of January before she arrived at Galveston, having called on the way at Coronel, Punta Arenas, Monte Video, and St. Lucia. Her agents at Galveston had tried to secure permission for her to enter the Government dry dock at New Orleans for the purpose of shipping a new propeller. They were, however, informed that the United States Navy Department had ruled that, during the continuance of hostilities, government docks

[58] On this voyage she was delayed for eleven days at Durban on account of her crew refusing duty and their being imprisoned. A new crew was signed on.

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were not available for vessels under flags of belligerent nations. The propeller had therefore to be changed at Galveston without docking. She then went on to Pensacola and New York, from which port she returned to Australia *viâ* South Africa. During the next two years her itinerary was: Melbourne to Le Havre (with wheat); Newport, Monmouthshire, to Port Sudan (with coal); Calcutta to Fremantle (with coal); Australia to Liverpool (with concentrates, wool, and jam); South Wales to Dakar (with coal); New York to Australia (with case oil); and Sydney to Liverpool (with wool and foodstuffs).

At Liverpool on the 12th of March, 1918, she was handed over to the Commonwealth Government Line, and was immediately requisitioned by the British Shipping Controller for a voyage to New Orleans to load wheat for the United Kingdom. Leaving Liverpool on the 30th, she was torpedoed about 4 o'clock next morning (Easter Sunday) in the Irish Sea, twelve miles W. by N. from the Calf of Man. Her wireless was at once put out of action, and No. 1 hold rapidly filled with water. Her four boats were launched, one lying off a short distance, the other remaining alongside waiting for the order to abandon her. While they were waiting thus, the submarine fired a second torpedo, which struck the *Conargo* abreast of one of the lifeboats and killed its ten occupants. The other two boats then stood off; but at 8 o'clock, as she continued to float, the third officer boarded her. He found several dead bodies, as well as a seriously injured man, whom he rescued. The *Conargo* afterwards sank. One of the boats (containing Captain Clutterbuck,[59] who had been injured) was picked up and taken to Dublin, arriving there at 4 p.m.; the others had been picked up by an Italian steamer at 7 and 9 a.m. respectively and landed at Holyhead.

COOEE. Formerly the German-Australian liner *Neumünster* of Hamburg, captured by H.M.A.S. *Pioneer* on the 16th of August, 1914, about eight miles west of Rottnest Island, Western Australia, on her way from Antwerp with general cargo for Australian ports. In consequence of rough seas it was impossible to send a boarding party across to her, and she was accordingly ordered to follow the *Pioneer* into Fremantle Harbour. On reaching smooth water, she was boarded.

Employed by the Navy Department as a cargo carrier, she first reached England in March, 1915,[60] and, after discharging her cargo, was sent in ballast to Bahia Blanca and Puerto Militar on the Argentine coast to load wheat for Melbourne. In the following October she again left Australia for the United Kingdom, was then sent to Cardiff (where she was delayed through congestion of tonnage already awaiting berths) for a coal cargo for Colombo, and reached Australia several months later with some 6,000 tons of rice from Rangoon. Her subsequent war-cargoes included wheat, wool, tallow, coal, lead, steel, case oil, wire rods, and cocoa, and among the ports at which they were loaded or discharged were Sydney, Port Melbourne, Bunbury, Naples, Marseilles, Barry, Port Said, Dakar, Accra, and New York. Between August and October, 1917, she was delayed at Melbourne by the seamen's strike, and, in the end, had to be loaded by volunteer

[59] Capt. E. G. Clutterbuck. Commanded s.s. *Carina*, 1916/17; s.s. *Conargo*, 1917/18. Master mariner; of Surrey Hills, Vic.; b. London, 6 June, 1883.

[60] On her way across the Bay of Biscay she was stopped and examined by a French cruiser, whose captain had recognised her German build.

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labour. In the following December, while lying at anchor at Dakar, she came into collision with the *Roselands*, but escaped without damage. At New York on the 12th of April, 1918, she was transferred to the Commonwealth Government Line.

COOROY. Formerly the German barque *Athene* of Hamburg, captured at Sydney at the outbreak of war. Chartered by the Commonwealth Government in May, 1915, to Scott, Fell, & Company of Sydney, she left Newcastle (as *C 15*) with coal for the west coast of South America, thereafter loading at Antofagasta—on behalf of the British Ministry of Munitions—a cargo of nitrate of soda for Liverpool. On the 29th of August, 1917, she was captured by a German submarine ten miles S. by W. ½ W. from Hook Point in Waterford, Ireland, and sunk by a torpedo. Her crew landed at Queenstown the following day.

DONGARRA. Formerly the Hansa liner *Stolzenfels* of Bremen, captured at Sydney at the outbreak of war. Employed as a cargo carrier first by the Navy Department and later by the Commonwealth Government Line, she began her war work before the end of 1914, when (as *C 4*) she was sent to England with a full cargo. Leaving Barry on her outward voyage, she carried coal to Buenos Aires, and went thence to Bahia Blanca and La Plata to load wheat for Australia. In the following October she cleared from Sydney with concentrates and general cargo for New York, Boston, and Baltimore, returning to the Commonwealth *viâ* St. Lucia and Durban to lift wheat for Lisbon. For the remainder of the war she ran between Australia, the United Kingdom, and North America with wheat, flour, wool, concentrates, steel, copper, coal, and other cargo. In January, 1918, she was requisitioned by the British Shipping Controller to bring a cargo of wheat from the United States to England.

GILGAI. Formerly the Hansa liner *Wildenfels,* captured at Port Phillip Heads on the 18th of August, 1914. Employed by the Navy Department as a cargo carrier (*C 11*), she left Port Pirie on the 8th of March, 1915, with a full load of ore for Galveston, *viâ* Durban, and returned with wheat from Bahia Blanca. Then, after another round trip to America, she sailed from Albany at the end of August, 1916, with wheat for Naples, which she reached—by way of Durban, St. Vincent, and Gibraltar—on the 29th of October. Thenceforward she carried, besides foodstuffs from Australia to Europe, coal from Calcutta to Australia (during a coal strike), and paper from New York and Botwood (Newfoundland) to Australia. On the 1st of May, 1918, she was transferred to the Commonwealth Government Line.

MAIWATTA. Formerly the steamer *Germania* of Hamburg, captured at Sydney at the outbreak of war. Chartered by the Commonwealth Government in 1915 to Burns, Philp, & Company of Sydney, and employed in Pacific island-trading.

MOORA. Formerly the Norddeutscher Lloyd's *Thüringen* of Bremen, captured by H.M.A.S. *Pioneer* on the 26th of August, 1914, about ten miles south-west of Rottnest Island, Western Australia, while on her way from Antwerp to Fremantle direct. As it was found impossible to board her in the rough seas then prevailing, she was ordered to follow the *Pioneer* into Fremantle Harbour. In 1915 she was lent (as *H 1*) to the Government of India, and used for the carriage of troops and horses.

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MOORINA. Formerly the Norddeutscher Lloyd's *Lothringen* of Bremen, captured at Melbourne on the 15th of August, 1914. In 1915 she was lent (as *H 2*) to the Government of India and used mainly as a troopship. On the 5th of November, 1915, while carrying Indian troops, she was captured by a submarine 105 miles south from Cape Martello (Crete) and sunk by gun-fire.

PARATTAH. Formerly the German-Australian liner *Berlin* of Hamburg, captured at Sydney on the 21st of August, 1914. Employed by the Navy Department as a cargo carrier, she reached London in April, 1915, with a full cargo, part of which was destined for Liverpool. On the 17th of May, after waiting a month at Liverpool for a berth, she began to discharge, but next day a serious fire broke out among some copra in No. 4 hold, and, before it could be extinguished, the engine room had to be flooded. Owing to scarcity of labour on account of government demands for munition workers, repairs were not completed until the last week of August, when she left in ballast for New York to pick up a cargo for Australian and New Zealand ports. At New York she was delayed for two months in consequence of strikes preventing the delivery of the cargo. On the 20th of January, 1916, she cleared from Sydney with 5,100 tons of wheat, and, on reaching Las Palmas, received orders to take it to Palermo (Sicily) and afterwards to load at Porto Empedocle a cargo of sulphur for Melbourne and Sydney. In the following August she left Sydney for Marseilles, *viâ* Durban and Gibraltar, and for the next two and a half years ran between Australia, the United Kingdom, and North America. On the 11th of August, 1917, when eleven days out from Dakar on her way to the Bristol Channel, she was chased in the North Atlantic by a submarine.

TALAWA. Formerly the German steamer *Wotan* of Hamburg, captured at Newcastle at the outbreak of war. Employed as a cargo carrier by the Navy Department and, later, by the Commonwealth Government Line, she ran during the war years between Australia, Europe, North America, and Christmas Island, her various cargoes including wheat, flour, wool, concentrates, coal, salt, and phosphates. In April, 1916, she left Albany with wheat for Lisbon, *viâ* Durban and Las Palmas. Upon arrival at her destination on the 28th of June, a military guard was placed on board, and two days later the work of discharging her cargo began. On the 7th of July, however, the stevedores went on strike and some mill-hands, who were engaged in their stead, failed to put in an appearance after three days. In the end the *Talawa's* crew took the job in hand themselves, the officers driving the winches and helping to re-bag loose wheat in the holds.

On the 5th of May, 1917, while on passage with stores from Cardiff to Leghorn, she was engaged about 1 p.m. by a submarine off Alassio (North Italy). A smooth sea was running, and the submarine, whose periscope was observed by those on the *Talawa* just before the torpedo struck the ship, discharged three torpedoes at her. The *Talawa's* gunners replied, firing about a dozen shells without success. The crew, who suffered no casualties, took to the boats after the third torpedo, but reboarded their ship on the approach of an Italian destroyer. The *Talawa* was then beached at Alassio, and it

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was found that a large hole (approximately 38 by 26 feet) had been blown in No. 2 hold, the damage extending as far as her double bottom. She was afterwards taken to Leghorn for repairs, and recommissioned on the 15th of March, 1918.

TOROMEO. Formerly the German steamer *Tiberius* of Hamburg, captured in Port Jackson on the 5th of August, 1914, after coming in ballast from Port Pirie. Employed by the Navy Department as a cargo carrier, she arrived in England early in 1915, and, after discharging her inward cargo, loaded rails at Middlesborough for the Australian transcontinental railway. On her return to the Commonwealth, she was sent with concentrates to Galveston. The voyage took much longer than was anticipated, for, like the *Conargo*, she found on arrival at Panama that in consequence of landslides the Canal was closed to traffic, and she was thus forced to go round Cape Horn, part of the way in company with the *Conargo*.

In June, 1916, she left Port Phillip with 5,818 tons of wheat for Naples, returned thither in ballast, and left again on the 15th of December with concentrates for Swansea and wool and other cargo for London. On the 20th of February, 1917, while proceeding up the Channel, she struck a submerged wreck off Newhaven, and had to put into that harbour with twenty-four feet of water in the forepeak; and, two days later, she collided with an unknown steamer in The Downs.[61]

On the 15th of April, 1918—at the conclusion of her next voyage to England—she was handed over to the Commonwealth Government Line. On the 1st of May she was attacked by a submarine in the English Channel, but the torpedo missed its mark.

[61] Before leaving England in May 1917 she was fitted with wireless.

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III. CARGO STEAMERS PURCHASED BY THE COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT.

Name, Gross Tonnage.	Port of Registry.	Commanders.	Where served.	Remarks.
Australbrook (ex *Strathesk*) 4336	Melbourne	C. Laurie M. Festu	Indian, Atlantic, and Pacific Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, New Zealand, Europe, America, South Africa	Chased by submarine in Irish Sea, July 1918
Australbush (ex *Strathgarry*) 4398	Adelaide	— Duncan	Indian and Atlantic Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, Europe, America, Burma	Torpedoed and sunk in English Channel (7 miles E. ½ N. from the Eddystone), 13 Nov. 1917
Australcrag (ex *Strathleven*) 4396	Melbourne	W. Mayne C. H. Bennett F. J. Ogilvie	Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, Europe, Africa, America	
Australdale (ex *Strathendrick*) 4379	Brisbane	— Wilson — Lamont	Indian, Atlantic, and Pacific Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, Europe, India	Torpedoed and sunk in N. Atlantic (165 miles N.W. by W. from Cape Vilano, Spain), 19 Oct. 1917
Australfield (ex *Vermont*) 4271	Hobart	R. Jalland E. Stott	Indian, Atlantic, and Pacific Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, New Zealand, America, Europe, Egypt, Burma	

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Australford (ex *Strathavon*) 4403	Adelaide	O. J. Kydd	Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, New Zealand, Europe, America, Egypt, India, Burma, Canada, North Africa	Encountered submarines — in N. Atlantic, 28 June 1918; in Mediterranean, 14 and 15 July 1918
Australglen (ex *Strathord*) 4417	Hobart	J. Cann F. Daniel W. Thompson	Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, New Zealand, Europe, America, Egypt, India, Singapore, Java	
Australmead (ex *Kirkoswald*) 4021	Melbourne	E. McMillan	Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, New Zealand, Europe, America	
Australmount (ex *Strathbeg*) 4338	Sydney	D. McIntyre	Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, New Zealand, Europe, Africa, America	
Australpeak (ex *Strathspey*) 4432	Brisbane	J. Ronald J. Mason G. H. Jones S. G. Robson	Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, Europe, America, East Africa, India	Engines broke down in Atlantic, 17 Feb. 1917. Attacked by submarines: (1) in English Channel, 13 Nov. 1917—torpedo missed ship; (2) in N. Atlantic, 15 Dec. 1917 — three torpedoes missed ship; (3) in Irish Sea, 16 Aug. 1918—torpedo missed ship

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CARGO STEAMERS PURCHASED BY THE COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT—*continued.*

Name, Gross Tonnage.	Port of Registry.	Commanders.	Where served.	Remarks.
Australplain (ex *Ardanmhor*) 4454	Fremantle	G. A. Cockell	Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, Europe, America, India	
Australpool (ex *Strathairly*) 4326	Fremantle	R. Braddon W. E. Price	Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, Europe, America, Canada, Egypt, India	
Australport (ex *Ardangorm*) 3570	Adelaide	F. J. Ogilvie	Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, New Zealand, Europe, America, Egypt, India, Siberia	Collided with vessel at Cardiff, 21 March 1917
Australrange (ex *Strathdee*) 4409	Sydney	S. G. Robson W. Mayne	Indian and Atlantic Oceans, Mediterranean; Europe, Egypt, India, Burma	
Australstream (ex *Daltonhall*) 3534	Sydney	A. C. Reed R. Jalland	Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans, Mediterranean; Australia, New Zealand, Europe, America	

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AUSTRALBROOK. Formerly the Burrell liner *Strathesk* of Glasgow. This vessel was running under Admiralty requisition when purchased by the Commonwealth Government, and not until October, 1916, was she released from service in the Mediterranean. She then went to New York to lift a full cargo for New Zealand and Australian ports. In March, 1917, she left Durban with iron and bark for Dunedin, Sydney, and Melbourne. Between June and August she carried three loads of coal from Newcastle to Melbourne, but was then held up by the general shipping strike. At the end of September, after being loaded with wheat and flour by non-union labour, and fitted with wireless, she cleared for America. Special precautions were observed in consequence of the recent sinking of the *Cumberland*.[62] From this time onwards the *Australbrook* carried foodstuffs and munitions mainly between Australia, United Kingdom and the Continent, and America.

Although herself never attacked, she witnessed, when off Carnarvon Bay on convoy from the River Plate, a fight between the Holyhead-Dublin packet boat and a German submarine in July, 1918. Just after this the *Australbrook* was detached to Belfast, accompanied by a drifter. Zigzagging her way across, she was dogged by a submarine from the Calf of Man to the Irish coast. Off Copeland Island the sound of firing was heard, and it was afterwards learned that a collier had been sunk.

AUSTRALBUSH. Formerly the Burrell liner *Strathgarry* of Glasgow. Taken over by the Commonwealth Government on the 17th of June, 1916, at New York. She was then running between America and the Continent on a time charter which would not expire until November, and this charter was taken over with purchase. It was thus May, 1917, before she reached Australia, bringing rice from Rangoon for Melbourne and Sydney. On the 13th of June, 1917, she left Newcastle with 5,548 tons of coal for the Port Pirie smelters, but, when off Wilson's Promontory, was diverted to Melbourne, where the coal was unloaded; she thereupon returned to Newcastle, this time for coal for the South Australian railways. Then, shipping wheat at Port Adelaide, she left on the 10th of August for France. On the 13th of November, when proceeding in ballast with a convoy from Le Havre to the Bristol Channel, she was torpedoed and sunk by a submarine seven miles E. ½ N. from the Eddystone lighthouse, two lives being lost.

AUSTRALCRAG. Formerly the Burrell liner *Strathleven* of Glasgow. Taken over by the Commonwealth Government in July, 1916, at Le Havre. Like the *Australbush*, *Australmead*, and *Australpeak*, she was running between America and Europe on a time charter, and was not released by the Admiralty until mid-November, when, after being fitted with wireless, she picked up at Liverpool a cargo for Natal and Portuguese East Africa. Reaching Fremantle on the 16th of April, 1917, she left early the following month with wheat for France, and thereafter carried cargo between Australia, United Kingdom and the Continent, and America.

AUSTRALDALE. Formerly the Burrell liner *Strathendrick* of Glasgow. Taken over by the Commonwealth on the 11th of June, 1916, at Calcutta while running under Admiralty requisition. Reaching

[62] *See pp. 357-60.*

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Sydney at the beginning of October, she filled up with zinc concentrates, lead, copra, and other cargo, and sailed on the 11th of November for London *viâ* South Africa. After being fitted with wireless she sailed in the following February for Queensland. She next carried rails (for the transcontinental railway) and coal from Newcastle to Fremantle, and then sailed for France with a full shipment of wheat and wool.

On the 19th of October, 1917, while proceeding in convoy to Gibraltar, and herself carrying coals from Wales, she was torpedoed and sunk 165 miles N.W. by N. ¾ N. from Cape Vilano, on the north-west coast of Spain. The crew left the ship in three boats; one of these—a lifeboat, in which were the majority of officers and men—was never seen again; the other two reached the French coast within fifty miles of each other. By the time they landed, the occupants were suffering from a skin affection of the ears, face, hands, and feet, and two deaths occurred on the way. In all, 27 lives were lost.

AUSTRALFIELD. Formerly the Gow Harrison liner *Vermont* of Glasgow. Taken over by the Commonwealth Government at the beginning of July, 1916, at a South Wales port. She was immediately sent to New York, where she loaded cargo for Australasian ports. At Williamstown (Victoria) in November she loaded wheat and left on the 24th for Europe. On the return voyage she carried coal from Wales to Port Said, there filled up with salt for Colombo, and sailed thence to Bassein (Burma) for rice, which was discharged at Brisbane, Sydney, and Melbourne. Before going into dock, the vessel was used in July, 1917, to bring 5,660 tons of coal from Newcastle to Melbourne. While she was in dock in August, the general shipping strike commenced—her crew resigned, and the dock work, which had temporarily to be suspended, was in the end finished by non-union labour.

AUSTRALFORD. On arrival at Dundee on the 14th of June, 1916, after having been frozen-in at Archangel for six months, the Burrell liner *Strathavon* (of Glasgow) was sent to Middlesborough for repairs, and upon their completion, having been bought by the Australian Government, was handed over on the 4th of August to the Commonwealth Government Line, her name being changed to *Australford*. Signing on a crew at Middlesborough, the vessel left in ballast for New York, where a full general cargo was loaded for New Zealand and Australia. At Melbourne, which was reached towards the end of November, the crew signed on afresh (this time on Australian articles); here, also, the ship was fitted with a gun-platform, though a gun was not mounted until later, at Dakar. The itinerary of the first round voyage was as follows: Geelong to Le Havre, *viâ* The Cape and Dakar (with flour); Le Havre to Barry Dock in South Wales; Barry to Port Said (where the gun was taken off) with coal; Port Said to Chittagong (with salt); Chittagong to Rangoon (in ballast); Rangoon to Melbourne and Sydney (with 6,500 tons of rice); Sydney to Newcastle and thence (with 5,900 tons of coal) to Melbourne.

On the next voyage overseas (Melbourne to Bordeaux, *viâ* The Cape), the *Australford* had, on account of the seamen's strike in Australia, to be worked by a "scratch" crew. Before leaving she was fitted at the Williamstown Naval Yard with a 3-pounder gun (said to have been used in the South African War), and two men of the R.A.N. Brigade were embarked as gunners. At Dakar she joined a

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convoy which left on the 30th of November, 1917, being escorted as far as the Bay of Biscay. During the run across the Bay she received wireless warnings of nineteen positions of danger and orders to get in touch with patrols, but the patrols were not seen. Outside the bar at Bordeaux she was obliged to wait for twelve hours while a mine-field, just laid by a German submarine, was being swept up.

The *Australford* was now lent to the Admiralty and despatched in ballast with five other ships to Portland (Maine), being appointed leader for the voyage. From Portland she went to Halifax to join a convoy of thirty-six ships bound for the United Kingdom and France, and, after an uneventful voyage, discharged her cargo at Sunderland. Then, fitted with a 4.7-inch gun and mine-sweeping gear, she joined first a convoy proceeding to the Thames for instructions, and then an Atlantic convoy of twenty-five ships at Plymouth. Two days out from that port the ships were ordered to continue on their way independently. Approaching Louisburg, the *Australford* damaged her bows in heavy field ice; after temporary repairs she made for St. John (New Brunswick), loaded a full cargo of flour for Belfast, and left in company with sixteen ships under an American cruiser. From Belfast she went to Cardiff for repairs. On the way thither rockets fired by a torpedoed steamer were seen.

The next voyage—from Cardiff to Alexandria, with coal (freight £10 10s. a ton)—was fraught with incident. The *Australford* joined thirty-two other ships at Milford Haven, her master (Captain Kydd[63]) being appointed vice-commodore of the convoy, which left port on the 27th of June, 1918, escorted by an American gunboat. Next day, 130 miles N. ¼ W. from Cape Vilano, the flagship (s.s. *Queen*) was torpedoed, and sank within three minutes, the victims including the commodore and his staff. Captain Kydd thereupon took charge and brought the convoy to Gibraltar. Here it was re-formed, the *Australford* (her captain again vice-commodore) going in company with fourteen other vessels to Bizerta. Five ships—*Australford*, *Branksome Hall*, *Waitemata*, *Saint Patrick*, and a French steamer (bound for Madagascar with native troops and passengers)—were thence ordered to Port Said with an escort of four trawlers and a British sloop. The convoy was frequently attacked, and, about 2 a.m. on the 14th of July, the *Branksome Hall* was sunk 68 miles N.W. by W. from Mersa Susa, after having escaped two attempts made just previously. The following night, 100 miles E. ¾ N. from Mersa Susa, the *Waitemata* and the Frenchman were torpedoed together, the latter going down so quickly (inside of four minutes) that 280 of those on board were drowned. All the *Waitemata's* crew were saved, including a trimmer who had been blown off the ship by the explosion of the torpedo. The *Saint Patrick* and *Australford* reached Alexandria without mishap; a special escort was sent out to meet them. The *Australford* was sent to Calcutta with a cargo of salt from Port Said, and in October returned to Melbourne and Sydney.

AUSTRALGLEN. Formerly the Burrell liner *Strathord* of Glasgow. Taken over by the Commonwealth Government on the 15th of June, 1916, at Baltimore, while she was loading for Leghorn under Admiralty requisition. From Leghorn she proceeded to Port Said, shipped a cargo of salt for Singapore, and thence, with general cargo,

[63] Capt. O. J. Kydd, M.B.E. Commanded s.s. *Australford*, 1916/20. Master mariner; of Inverkeilor, Forfarshire, Scotland; b. 2 Jan., 1884.

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made for Fremantle, which she reached on the 1st of November. Four weeks later she sailed from Bunbury with wheat for Le Havre, and on the 2nd of April, 1917 (after being fitted with wireless), left Wales on the outward run to Australia, taking a shipment of coal as far as Port Said and salt thence to Colombo. She had been fixed to load sugar at Tilitjap (Java) for Adelaide, but was later ordered to take the cargo for Suez. She then returned to Sydney and was thereafter mainly engaged in carrying foodstuffs and general cargo between Australia and Europe, or, on several occasions, American Pacific ports.

AUSTRALMEAD. Formerly the Kyle Transport Company's *Kirkoswald* of Liverpool. When taken over by the Commonwealth Government in July, 1916, at Marseilles, she was running between America and the Continent on a time charter. It was thus not until the 22nd of November that she left for Australia, *viâ* New York, where she picked up a cargo for Wellington, Lyttelton, Dunedin, Sydney, and Melbourne. In May she left Newcastle for Fremantle with rails, and on the 4th of June began at Fremantle to load wheat for France, sailing ten days later. From then onwards she carried foodstuffs and general cargo between Australia, United Kingdom and the Continent, and North America.

AUSTRALMOUNT. Formerly the Burrell liner *Strathbeg* of Glasgow. Taken over by the Commonwealth on the 24th of June, 1916, at Java, but not released by the Admiralty, which had requisitioned her some time previously, until the 14th of September, at Liverpool. She thereupon loaded cargo at Birkenhead for Natal and Portuguese East Africa, and, on the 23rd of January, 1917, arrived at Fremantle with South African coal for the Western Australian railways. By the middle of February she had filled up with wheat and left for Le Havre *viâ* The Cape; and, before again reaching the Commonwealth, she had carried coals from Wales to the Azores, and gone thence in ballast to New York to pick up a cargo for New Zealand and Australian ports.

On the 12th of July, 1918, the *Australmount*, after loading at London a general cargo for New Zealand, took on at Plymouth 500 tons of explosive, and left with a convoy bound for New York. Detaching herself on the fifth day out, she went on alone down the Caribbean to the Panama Canal. On arrival at Colon, the port authorities at first hesitated at giving her permission to pass through the waterway with such a dangerous cargo; but eventually let her through after taking the precaution of suspending the other traffic in both directions during her passage, and placing on board a party of American sailors to see that instructions as to fire were strictly observed. A powerful tug followed her in case she ran aground. The explosive was thus duly delivered at Auckland.

AUSTRALPEAK. Formerly the Burrell liner *Strathspey* of Glasgow. Taken over by the Commonwealth in July, 1916, at New York. She was then running between America and the Continent on a time charter, and it was December before she was released at Port Talbot (Wales). For the rest of the war she carried chiefly wheat, foodstuffs, munitions, and general cargo between Australia, England, and France by way of either African, Indian, or American ports. In August, 1917, her British crew was placed on Australian articles.

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On the 17th of February, 1917, in the course of a voyage from Port Arthur (Texas) with a cargo of case oil for East African ports and Mauritius, when she was off St. Paul Rocks, some 900 miles north-east from Pernambuco, her high-pressure cylinder blew out. While the engineers carried out temporary repairs, the deck-hands made sails, etc., and the vessel was coaxed southwards with her engines doing two knots. Although for days at a time they broke down altogether, and westerly gales were encountered, she reached Cape Town on the 13th of April. Every night her wireless had picked up the signals of a German raider, which several times appeared to be close.

On the 13th of November, 1917, when proceeding in ballast with a convoy from Le Havre to the Bristol Channel, she had her first encounter with a submarine, which unsuccessfully attacked her off the Eddystone light; it then torpedoed the *Australbush* following in her wake. In the Atlantic a month later (15 December) the *Australpeak* survived another submarine attack—on this occasion, by fighting her opponent with her gun and two howitzers and by zigzagging, she managed to escape all three torpedoes fired at her. Again on the 16th of August, 1918, near the Isle of Man, she met a submarine, whose torpedo missed its mark owing to her vigorous zigzagging. The action of a destroyer then helped her to get away.

AUSTRALPLAIN. Formerly the *Ardanmhor* of Glasgow. When purchased by the Commonwealth Government in June, 1916, she was *en route* from Boston to Savona (Italy) under Admiralty requisition. Up till then her war-service had taken her to American, Indian, and other ports, carrying coal and war-material on the outward voyages and ore and munitions on the homeward runs. She was now sent to Melbourne in ballast and thenceforward was mainly employed carrying wheat from Australia to England and France, and returning—sometimes *viâ* America—with general cargoes.

AUSTRALPOOL. Formerly the Burrell liner *Strathairly* of Glasgow. Taken over by the Commonwealth on the 13th of June, 1916, at Penarth (Wales). She was then running under Admiralty requisition, and had to proceed to Montreal and back before leaving for Australia. She came out *viâ* New York and Papeete—and on the 17th of January cleared from Geelong with wheat for Le Havre. On her return voyage she carried coal from Wales to Port Said, and, going on to Calcutta, loaded a general cargo for Australian ports; but by the time when she arrived at Melbourne (16 August) the seamen's strike had commenced, and her crew resigned. After anchoring in Port Phillip for a week, she moved up the Yarra, her Melbourne cargo being unloaded by non-union labour, and on the 31st of August she sailed for Sydney with a "scratch" crew. Thereafter she ran with cargo between Australia and North America or the United Kingdom for the remainder of the war.

AUSTRALPORT. As the *Ardangorm* (of Glasgow), this vessel had in 1915 made two voyages with munitions from New York to Vladivostock. Upon returning to London with a cargo of rice in July, 1916, she was taken over by the Commonwealth Government and sent to New York, whence on the 1st of October she sailed with general cargo for Lyttelton, Dunedin, Sydney, and Melbourne. Lifting wheat at Melbourne, she reached Le Havre on the 9th of March, 1916, and, after discharging the cargo, went on to Cardiff. There on the 21st she was damaged in collision, but on the 27th of May left for

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Port Said with coal. Thence she carried salt to Calcutta and returned to Australia. For the remainder of the war she was occupied in making similar voyages, and, though herself never attacked by enemy submarines, she was on two occasions in convoys which encountered them—first at the entrance to the English Channel, when in a convoy of thirty-four ships an American vessel was torpedoed. The *Australport's* second experience occurred in the Mediterranean between Pantellaria Island and Cape Bon (Tunis), when the appearance of a suspicious-looking steamer and submarine caused the convoy to alter course, and the escort (a French destroyer and two trawlers) to open fire on the strangers. The convoy continued on its way unharmed.

AUSTRALRANGE. Formerly the Burrell liner *Strathdee* of Glasgow. Taken over by the Commonwealth Government on the 10th of June, 1916, at Barry (Wales) while still running under Admiralty requisition. She arrived at Melbourne towards the end of September, and, after docking, carried wheat to the United Kingdom and France, returning *viâ* Port Said, Calcutta, and Rangoon, from which port she carried rice to Australia. On her second voyage, when she was loading at Rangoon in February, 1918, the British Government suggested that, as rice was urgently required in the United Kingdom, she might be permitted to bring the cargo to England. On the matter being referred to the Prime Minister, Mr. Hughes agreed to the change, stating that the policy of the Commonwealth Government "is to subordinate all other interests to that of supplying Britain with foodstuffs."

AUSTRALSTREAM. Formerly the Furness Withy liner *Daltonhall* of West Hartlepool. Taken over by the Commonwealth Government early in July, 1916, while running under Admiralty requisition. In December she reached Australia with cargo from Glasgow, Liverpool, and London. Three weeks later she was on her way to France with wheat from Bunbury, and, after discharging it at Le Havre, was ordered to New York to pick up a cargo for New Zealand and Australian ports. The remaining years of the war were mainly occupied in the carriage of similar cargoes between Australia, United Kingdom and France, and North America.

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IV. TRANSPORTS REQUISITIONED BY THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT.

In the case of transports 1-44, the number of officers, troops, and horses shown in this list represent those for which the vessels were fitted on their first voyage as transports. In the case of transports 45-74, the numbers show the maximum for which the vessels were at any time fitted.

Number and Name, Gross Tonnage.	Speed.	Owners.	Master, when Vessel Requisitioned.	Fitted for			Remarks.
				Officers.	Other Ranks.	Horses.	
A 1. *Hymettus* .. 4606	11½	British India S.N. Co. Ltd., London	A. J. Evans	5	110	752	Commonwealth control ended, 15 May 1917
A 2. *Geelong* .. 7951	12	P. & O. S.N. Co., London	R. Bidwell	62	1,539	—	Collided with s.s. *Bonvilston* in Mediterranean (96 miles N. of Alexandria), 1 Jan. 1916, and sunk. *See p. 419*
A 3. *Orvieto* .. 12,130	15	Orient S.N. Co. Ltd., London	P. N. Layton	209	1,425	22	Commonwealth control ended, 29 Dec. 1914
A 4. *Pera* .. 7635	11	P. & O. S.N. Co., London	S. Finch	11	100	446	Commonwealth control ended, 6 Jan. 1917. Torpedoed and sunk in Mediterranean (105 miles E. ¾ N. from Mersa Susa), 19 Oct. 1917
A 5. *Omrah* .. 8130	15	Orient S.N. Co. Ltd., London	V. Seymour	55	1,316	20	Commonwealth control ended, 10 Feb. 1915. Torpedoed and sunk in Mediterranean (40 miles S.W. ¾ S. from Cape Spartivento, Sardinia), 12 May 1918. *See p. 425*
A 6. *Clan Maccorquodale* 5121	12½	Cayzer, Irvine, & Co. Ltd., Glasgow	J. Goodwin	7	129	500	Commonwealth control ended, 14 April 1915. Torpedoed and sunk in Mediterranean (165 miles N.W. by N. from Alexandria), 17 Nov. 1917
A 7. *Medic* .. 12,032	13	Oceanic S.N. Co. Ltd., Liverpool	J. Roberts	31	1,076	283	Commonwealth control ended, 26 Oct. 1917

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TRANSPORTS REQUISITIONED BY THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT—*continued.*

Number and Name, Gross Tonnage.	Speed.	Owners.	Master, when Vessel Requisitioned.	Fitted for			Remarks.
				Officers.	Other Ranks.	Horses.	
A 8. Argyllshire 10,392 ..	14	The Scottish Shire Line Ltd., London	W. Chicken	100	1,000	397	Commonwealth control ended, 24 Jan. 1918. Attacked by submarines: (1) off Le Havre, 27 May 1915—two torpedoes missed ship; (2) in English Channel, 3 miles S.W. from Start Point, 5 Feb. 1917—vessel torpedoed, but reached Plymouth
A 9. Shropshire 11,911 ..	14	Federal S.N. Co. Ltd., London	B. G. Hayward	57	878	461	Rammed by *Ascanius* in Indian Ocean, 21 Nov. 1914 (*see p. 412, and Vol. I, 1st edn., pp. 108-9*). Commonwealth control ended, 5 Aug. 1917
A 10. Karroo 6127 ..	12	Ellerman & Bucknall S.S. Co. Ltd., London	E. R. Large	17	390	438	Commonwealth control ended, 3 Jan. 1917. Attacked by submarines: (1) with gun- and torpedo-fire, in N. Atlantic (west from Scilly Is.), 22 April 1917—two torpedoes missed ship; (2) with gun-fire, in English Channel, 21 May 1917—saved by own gun; (3) in English Channel, 6 July 1917—torpedo missed ship
A 11. Ascanius 10,048 ..	13	Ocean S.S. Co. Ltd., Liverpool	F. Chrimes	70	1,750	12	Collided with *Shropshire* in Indian Ocean, 21 Nov. 1914 (*see p. 412, and Vol. I, 1st edn., pp. 108-9*). Commonwealth control ended, 30 July 1917
A 12. Saldanha 4594 .	11	Ellerman & Bucknall S.S. Co. Ltd., London	A. McClelland	5	50	300	Commonwealth control ended, 14 June 1917. Torpedoed and sunk in Mediterranean (95 miles N. from Algiers), 18 March 1918

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A 13. Katuna .. 4641	11	Ellerman & Bucknall S.S. Co. Ltd., London	H. R. Jackson	6	95	528	Commonwealth control ended, 10 Feb. 1917. Chased by submarine in Mediterranean, 18 Sept. 1916, but saved by own gun-fire
A 14. Euripides .. 15,050	15	G. Thompson & Co. Ltd., London	A. H. H. G. Douglas	136	2,204	20	Commonwealth control ended, 2 June 1917
A 15. Star of England (later renamed *Port Sydney*) 9136	13½	Commonwealth & Dominion Line Ltd., London	F. W. Ulyatt	29	499	476	Commonwealth control ended, 22 Sept. 1917
A 16. Star of Victoria (later renamed *Port Melbourne*) 9152	13½	Commonwealth & Dominion Line Ltd., London	E. D. Beck	30	511	537	Commonwealth control ended, 2 Oct. 1917
A 17. Port Lincoln .. 7243	12	Commonwealth & Dominion Line Ltd., London	T. G. Hutchinson	25	370	376	Commonwealth control ended, 26 Sept. 1917
A 18. Wiltshire .. 10,390	14	Federal S.N. Co. Ltd., London	W. L. Prentice	36	720	505	Commonwealth control ended, 27 Dec. 1917
A 19. Afric .. 11,999	13	Oceanic S.N. Co. Ltd., Liverpool	W. Marshall	49	1,300	12	Torpedoed and sunk in English Channel (12 miles S.S.W. from Eddystone), 12 Feb. 1917
A 20. Hororata .. 9400	14	New Zealand Shipping Co. Ltd., London	J. J. Cameron	67	2,000	124	Commonwealth control ended, 11 Sept. 1917
A 21. Marere .. 6443	12½	Commonwealth & Dominion Line Ltd., London	P. P. E. Mello	10	100	475	Attacked by submarines in Mediterranean (236 miles from Malta), 18 Jan. 1916, and sunk by gun-fire after two torpedoes had missed ship. *See p. 419*

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TRANSPORTS REQUISITIONED BY THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT—*continued.*

Number and Name, Gross Tonnage.	Speed.	Owners.	Master, when Vessel Requisitioned.	Fitted for			Remarks.
				Officers.	Other Ranks.	Horses.	
A 22. Rangatira .. 8948	14	Shaw, Savill, & Albion Co. Ltd., London	R. D. Lowden	20	440	490	Commonwealth control ended, 5 Feb., 1915. Stranded on Robben Island, Cape of Good Hope, 31 March 1916
A 23. Suffolk .. 7573	12	Potter, Trinder, & Gwyn, London	P. Davies	36	1,000	12	Mined in English Channel, 26 Dec. 1916, but reached Portsmouth; collided with *Ulysses* at Durban, 14 June 1917. Commonwealth control ended, 30 Aug. 1917
A 24. Benalla .. 11,118	14	P. & O. S.N. Co., London	W. C. Symonds	50	1,200	12	Attacked by submarine with gun-fire in Mediterranean, 3 Dec. 1915, but saved by own gun. Commonwealth control ended, 6 Aug. 1917
A 25. Anglo Egyptian . 7379	12	Nitrate Producers' S.S. Co. Ltd., London	P. J. Greenhill	12	100	549	Chased by submarine in Mediterranean, 17 March 1917, and escaped through own speed. Commonwealth control ended, 16 April 1917
A 26. Armadale .. 6153	11	Australind S.S. Co. Ltd., London	A. Hunter	12	272	386	Commonwealth control ended, 7 June 1917. Attacked by submarines: (1) in N. Atlantic on afternoon of 26 June 1917—with gun-fire; (2) several hours later—torpedo missed ship; (3) 160 miles N.W. from Tory Island, N.W. coast of Ireland, at 1 a.m., 27 June 1917—torpedoed and sunk
A 27. Southern .. 4769	10½	Century Shipping Co. Ltd., London	R. J. Jalland	7	145	328	Commonwealth control ended, 3 Feb. 1915. *See Vol. I, 1st edn., pp. 99-100*

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A 28.	*Miltiades* 7814	..	13	G. Thompson & Co. Ltd., London	W. J. Burge	42	977	—	Commonwealth control ended, 15 Sept. 1917
A 29.	*Suevic* 12,531	..	13	Oceanic S.N. Co. Ltd., Liverpool	E. J. English	40	510	527	Commonwealth control ended, 9 Sept. 1917
A 30.	*Borda* 11,136	..	14	P. & O. S.N. Co., London	G. A. Millington	26	550	260	Commonwealth control ended, 10 Sept. 1917
A 31.	*Ajana* 7759	..	13	Australind S.S. Co. Ltd., London	T. Young	17	410	304	Commonwealth control ended, 12 May 1917. Attacked by submarines: (1) in English Channel, 14 April 1917—torpedo missed ship; (2) off N.W. coast of Ireland, 29 July 1917—chased, but saved by own speed
A 32.	*Themistocles* 11,231	..	15	G. Thompson & Co. Ltd., London	P. J. Collins	100	1,220	—	Commonwealth control ended, 20 Oct. 1917
A 33.	*Ayrshire* 7763	..	13	The Scottish Shire Line Ltd., London	J. Wallace	20	330	297	Commonwealth control ended, 9 Jan. 1918
A 34.	*Persic* 12,042	..	13	Oceanic S.N. Co. Ltd., Liverpool	A. H. Summers	40	520	491	Commonwealth control ended, 8 Nov. 1917. Attacked by submarines: (1) in Mediterranean, 20 Sept. 1916—torpedo missed ship; (2) in N. Atlantic (N.W. from Scilly Is.), 7 Sept. 1918—torpedoed, but reached port
A 35.	*Berrima* 11,137	..	14	P. & O. S.N. Co., London	T. J. Hine	60	1,500	—	Torpedoed in English Channel, 18 Feb. 1917, but towed into port. Commonwealth control ended, 10 Oct. 1917

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TRANSPORTS REQUISITIONED BY THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT—*continued.*

Number and Name, Gross Tonnage.	Speed.	Owners.	Master, when Vessel Requisitioned.	Fitted for			Remarks.
				Officers.	Other Ranks.	Horses.	
*A 36. Boonah** (ex-enemy *Melbourne*) 5,926	10½	.. ..	J. K. Davis	5	120	498	Chased by submarine in Mediterranean, Oct. 1915. Attacked by submarines: (1) off W. coast of Ireland, 10 March 1917—saved by own gun; (2) S. from Tuskar lighthouse, Wexford, Ireland, 23 July 1918—torpedo missed ship. Transferred to Commonwealth Government Line, 28 March 1918. *See pp. 509-10.*
*A 37. Barambah** (ex-enemy *Hobart*) 5923	10½	.. ..	S. A. Anning	5	120	498	Transferred to Commonwealth Government Line, 23 May 1918. *See p. 508.*
A 38. Ulysses 14,499	14	China Mutual S.N. Co. Ltd., Liverpool	J. Barber	100	2,000	22	Collided with *Suffolk* at Durban, 14 June 1917. Commonwealth control ended, 15 Aug. 1917
A 39. Port Macquarie 7236	12½	Commonwealth & Dominion Line Ltd., London	E. E. Warren	25	371	456	Commonwealth control ended, 13 Jan. 1917
A 40. Ceramic 18,481	15	Oceanic S.N. Co. Ltd., Liverpool	J. Stivey	100	2,700	24	Commonwealth control ended, 9 July 1917. Attacked by submarines: (1) at entrance to English Channel, 9 June 1917—torpedo missed ship; (2) in Bristol Channel, 21 July 1917—chased, but rescued by patrol.
*A 41. Bakara** (ex-enemy *Cannstatt*) 5930	10½	.. ..	J. Buchanan	6	120	348	Transferred to Commonwealth Government Line, 1 May 1918. *See p. 507.*

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*A 42. Boorara** (ex-enemy *Pfalz*) 6570 ..	10½	.. ..	J. S. Macphail	6	150	414	Collided with (1) French armoured cruiser *Kléber*, 18 July 1915; (2) s.s. *Abbassieh*, 27 June 1917; (3) s.s. *Adria*, 1 August 1917. Attacked by submarines: (1) in English Channel (off Beachy Head), 20 March 1918—torpedoed, but reached Southampton; (2) in North Sea (off Whitby), 23 July 1918—torpedoed, but reached the Tyne. Transferred to Commonwealth Government Line, 24 June 1919. *See pp. 421-2 and 510-12.*
*A 43. Barunga** (ex-enemy *Sumatra*) 7484 ..	11	.. ..	T. E. Cutler	6	140	367	Collided with (1) s.s. *Lucellum*, Dec. 1916; (2) dock entrance at Cardiff, 8 Jan. 1917; s.s. *Theodoros Pangalos*, 22 Feb. 1917. Transferred to Commonwealth Government Line, 11 March 1918. Attacked by submarines: (1) in English Channel, 7 July 1918—torpedo missed ship; (2) in N. Atlantic (150 miles W. by S. ½ S. from Bishop Rock, Scilly Is.), 15 July 1918—torpedoed and sunk. *See pp. 422-4 and 508-9.*
A 44. Vestalia 5528 ..	..	Gow, Harrison, & Co., Glasgow	D. B. Marshall	5	118	440	Commonwealth control ended, 10 March 1917. Chased by submarine in English Channel, 30 April 1917, but saved by own gun
*A 45. Bulla** (ex-enemy *Hessen*) 5099 ..	10½	.. ..	R. A. T. Wilson	6	911	400	Collided with Folkestone light-vessel, March 1917. Transferred to Commonwealth Government Line, 15 April 1918. *See pp. 512-3.*

* Manned by Australian officers and crews.

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TRANSPORTS REQUISITIONED BY THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT—*continued.*

Number and Name, Gross Tonnage.	Speed.	Owners.	Master, when Vessel Requisitioned.	Fitted for			Remarks.
				Officers.	Other Ranks.	Horses.	
A 46. *Clan Macgillivray* 5023	14	Cayzer, Irvine, & Co. Ltd., Glasgow	W. H. Ridgway	17	1,079	—	Commonwealth control ended, 16 Aug. 1917
A 47 *Mashobra* .. 8174	12½	British India S.N. Co. Ltd., London	H. J. Brooks	26	465	333	Commonwealth control ended, 21 Dec. 1916. Torpedoed and sunk in Mediterranean (140 miles S.W. from Cape Matapan, Greece), 15 April 1917, master being made prisoner
A 48. *Seang Bee* .. 5849	13	Lim Chin Tsong, Rangoon	A. Travis	21	1,014	—	Commonwealth control ended, 12 May 1917
A 49. *Seang Choon* .. 5807	13	Lim Chin Tsong, Rangoon	W. T. Larkins	18	1,017	—	Torpedoed and sunk off Irish coast (10 miles S.W. from the Fastnet), 10 July 1917. *See p. 421*
A 50. *Itonus* .. 5340	12	British India S.N. Co. Ltd., London	H. Carey	17	782	—	Torpedoed and sunk in Mediterranean (60 miles N.W. by W. ½ W. from Malta), 20 Dec. 1916, master (then Captain T. Costello) being made prisoner. *See p. 420*
A 51. *Chilka* .. 3952	14	British India S.N. Co. Ltd., London	H. Fenton	12	313	320	Commonwealth control ended, 4 Aug. 1915
A 52. *Surada* .. 5324	10	British India S.N. Co. Ltd., London	W. J. Bishop	7	257	275	Commonwealth control ended, 4 Jan. 1917. Torpedoed and sunk in Port Said "swept channel," 2 Nov. 1918
A 53. *Itria* .. 5318	10	British India S.N. Co. Ltd., London	T. Walsh	7	212	254	Commonwealth control ended, 17 June 1917

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A 54.	*Runic* 12,490 ..	13	Oceanic S.N. Co. Ltd., Liverpool	J. J. Kearney	90	1,534	—	Collided with and sank s.s. *Horst Martini*, 3½ miles S. of Beachy Head, 1 May 1915. Commonwealth control ended, 27 Nov. 1917
A 55.	*Kyarra** 6953 ..	14	A.U.S.N. Co. Ltd., London	J. McIntosh	232	914	—	Commonwealth control ended, 4 Jan. 1918. Rammed at Marseilles by French steamer *Espagne*, 19 Oct. 1915. Attacked by submarines: (1) in Mediterranean, near Crete, 1915—rescued by H.M.S. *Beagle;* (2) off Malta, 11 Sept. 1916—saved by own gun; (3) in English Channel (2 miles S.S.E. from Anvil Point), 26 May, 1918—torpedoed and sunk. *See pp. 426 and 492-4.*
A 56.	*Palermo* 7597 ..	14	P. & O. S.N. Co., London	J. B. Ferguson	4	111	360	Commonwealth control ended, 10 Jan. 1917
A 57.	*Malakuta* 7430 ..	12	T. & J. Brocklebank Ltd., Liverpool	J. Hamilton	5	154	449	Commonwealth control ended, 24 Jan. 1917
A 58.	*Kabinga* 4657 ..	12	Ellerman & Bucknall S.S. Co. Ltd., London	T. Robinson	5	112	465	Captured by *Emden* in Bay of Bengal, 12 Sept. 1914, and released. Commonwealth control ended, 19 June 1917
A 59.	*Botanist* 7688 ..	13	Charente S.S. Co. Ltd., Liverpool	C. S. Rhodes	5	155	420	Commonwealth control ended, 6 Dec. 1916
A 60.	*Aeneas* 10,049 ..	14	Ocean S.S. Co. Ltd., Liverpool	J. Milhench	60	1,742	10	Commonwealth control ended, 22 June 1917
A 61.	*Kanowna** 6942 ..	14	A.U.S.N. Co. Ltd., London	W. Smith	82	980	—	Commonwealth control ended, 18 March 1919. *See pp. 75-8, 426. and 488-9.*

* Manned by Australian officers and crews.

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TRANSPORTS REQUISITIONED BY THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT—*continued.*

Number and Name, Gross Tonnage.	Speed.	Owners.	Master, when Vessel Requisitioned.	Fitted for			Remarks.
				Officers.	Other Ranks.	Horses.	
A 62. *Wandilla*† .. 7785	16	Adelaide S.S. Co. Ltd., Adelaide	C. C. Mackenzie	78	1,348	—	Lent to Admiralty for use as a hospital ship, 5 Aug. 1916. Rescued (1) crew of Danish steamer *Viking*, Jan. 1917; (2) survivors of torpedoed Italian troopship *Minas*, Feb. 1917. Held up and examined by submarine in Mediterranean, May 1918. Commonwealth control ended, 16 Aug. 1919. *See pp. 426-8 and 495.*
A 63. *Karoola** .. 7391	15	McIlwraith, McEacharn's Line Pty. Ltd., Melbourne	W. C. E. Morgan	96	1,190	—	Rescued passengers of wrecked s.s. *Highland Warrior*, 3 Oct. 1915. Commonwealth control ended, June 1919. *See pp. 426 and 489-90*
A 64. *Demosthenes* .. 11,223	15	G. Thompson & Co. Ltd., London	A. Robb	64	1,570	—	Commonwealth control ended, 16 March 1917
A 65. *Clan Macewen* .. 5140	14	Cayzer, Irvine, & Co. Ltd., Glasgow	R. K. Cowie	4	117	293	Commonwealth control ended, 24 April 1917
A 66. *Uganda* .. 5431	10	British India S.N. Co. Ltd., London	E. deG. Diamond	5	152	331	Commonwealth control ended, 4 Dec. 1916. Attacked by submarines: (1) with gun-fire, in Mediterranean, 17 June 1916—saved by own gun (*see pp. 419-20*); (2) in Mediterranean (90 miles N.E. by N. ¾ N. from Algiers), 27 May 1918—torpedoed and sunk

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A 67. *Orsova* 12,036 ..	18	Orient S.N. Co. Ltd., London	A. J. Coad	217	1,328	—	Commonwealth control ended, 28 Feb. 1917. Torpedoed by submarine in English Channel (3 miles E. by S. ½ S. from the Eddystone), 14 March 1917, but reached port
A 68. *Anchises* 10,046 ..	14	Ocean S.S. Co. Ltd., Liverpool	B. C. Lewis	45	1,736	—	Commonwealth control ended, 12 Oct. 1917. Attacked with gunfire by submarine in Atlantic, 23 Sept. 1918, but saved by own gun
A 69. *Warilda*† 7713 ..	16	Adelaide S.S. Co. Ltd., Adelaide	J. Sim	59	1,352	—	Lent to Admiralty for use as a hospital ship 25 July 1916. Collided with s.s. *Petit Gaudet*, 24 March 1918. Attacked by submarines: (1) in English Channel, Feb. 1918—torpedo failed to explode; (2) in English Channel (32 miles S.S.W. from Owers L.V.), 3 Aug. 1918—torpedoed and sunk. *See pp. 426, 428, and 495-8.*
A 70. *Ballarat* 11,120 ..	14	P. & O. S.N. Co., London	F. W. A. Hansen	48	1,577	--	Torpedoed in English Channel (24 miles S. by W. from Wolf Rock), 25 April 1917, and sank early next morning 7½ miles from The Lizard Light. *See pp. 420-1*
A 71. *Nestor* 14,501 ..	14	Ocean S.S. Co. Ltd., Liverpool	R. D. Owen	90	2,149	—	Commonwealth control ended, 26 June, 1917
A 72. *Beltana* 11,120 ..	14	P. & O. S.N. Co., London	W. G. Lingham	49	1,587	—	Commonwealth control ended, 14 Sept. 1917
A 73. *Commonwealth* 6616	14	P. & O. S.N. Co., London	E. M. Hussey-Cooper	23	982	--	Commonwealth control ended, 23 June 1917
A 74. *Marathon* 7827 ..	16	G. Thompson & Co. Ltd., London	W. M. Jermyn	44	1,202	—	Commonwealth control ended, 28 July 1917

* Manned by Australian officers and crews.
† Manned by Australian officers and (during part of her service) Australian crews.

Note.—The steamers *Berrima*, *Kanowna*,* *Eastern*, *Navua*, and *Te Anau* were requisitioned to convey Australian troops either to or from German New Guinea.

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APPENDIX No. 7.

CRUISING STRENGTH IN THE PACIFIC.

The following table shows the cruising ships of the belligerent powers in the Pacific (excluding the Indian Ocean) in August, 1914:—

(*Note.*—No power except Japan maintained a battle-fleet in the Pacific. The old British battleship *Triumph*, which formed part of the China Squadron, has been classified below with the armoured cruisers.)

—	Launching Date.	Biggest Guns.	Tonnage.	Designed Speed (knots).
Battle-cruisers:				
JAPANESE.				
Hiyei	1912	14-in.	27,500	27.5
Kongo	1912	14-in.	27,500	27.5
Ibuki	1907	12-in.	14,600	22
Kurama	1907	12-in.	14,600	21
BRITISH.				
Australia (Australian)	1911	12-in.	19,200	25
Armoured cruisers:				
JAPANESE.				
Ikoma	1906	12-in.	13,750	20.5
Tsukuba	1905	12-in.	13,750	21
Yakumo	1899	8-in.	9,850	20
Idzumo	1899	8-in.	9,750	21
Iwate	1900	8-in.	9,750	21
Adzuma	1899	8-in.	9,456	21
Asama	1898	8-in.	9,750	21.5
Tokiwa	1898	8-in.	9,750	21.5
Aso	1900	8-in.	7,800	21
Kasuga	1902	10-in.	7,750	20
Nisshin	1903	8-in.	7,750	20
BRITISH.				
Minotaur	1906	9.2-in.	14,600	23
Triumph (battleship) ..	1903	10-in.	11,800	20
Hampshire	1903	7.5-in.	10,850	22
Monmouth[1]	1901	6-in.	9,800	23

[1] The *Monmouth* reached the Pacific round Cape Horn from the Atlantic in the third week of August, 1914.

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—	Launching Date.	Biggest Guns.	Tonnage.	Designed Speed (knots).
FRENCH.				
Montcalm	1900	7.6-in.	9,517	21
Dupleix	1900	6.4-in.	7,700	21
GERMAN.				
Gneisenau	1906	8.2-in.	11,600	22.5
Scharnhorst	1906	8.2-in.	11,600	22.5
Light Cruisers:				
JAPANESE.				
Hirado	1911	6-in.	5,040	26
Chikuma	1911	6-in.	5,040	26
Yahagi	1911	6-in.	5,040	26
Tone	1907	6-in.	4,105	23
Niitaka	1902	6-in.	3,420	20
Tsushima	1902	6-in.	3,420	20
Otowa	1903	6-in.	3,000	21
BRITISH.				
Encounter (Australian)	1902	6-in.	5,880	20
Melbourne (Australian)	1912	6-in.	5,400	25.5
Sydney (Australian) ..	1912	6-in.	5,400	25.5
Yarmouth	1911	6-in.	5,250	25
Newcastle	1909	6-in.	4,800	25
Glasgow	1909	6-in.	4,800	25
GERMAN.				
Emden	1908	4.1-in.	3,600	24.5
Nürnberg	1906	4.1-in.	3,450	23.5
Leipzig	1905	4.1-in.	3,250	23
RUSSIAN.				
Zemtchug	1903	4.7-in.	3,050	24
Old or Small Cruisers:				
JAPANESE.[2]				
Soya	1899	6-in.	6,500	23
Tsugaru	1899	6-in.	6,630	20
Kasagi	1898	8-in.	4,760	22.5
Chitose	1898	8-in.	4,760	22.5
Akashi	1897	6-in.	2,700	20
Suma	1895	6-in.	2,657	20
Chiyoda	1890	4.7-in.	2,450	19

[2] Japan had also several older and smaller ships of this class.

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—	Launching Date.	Biggest Guns.	Tonnage.	Designed Speed (knots).
BRITISH.				
Rainbow (Canadian) ..	1891	6-in.	3,600	20
Philomel (New Zealand)	1890	4.7-in.	2,575	19
Pioneer (Australian) ..	1899	4-in.	2,200	20.5
Psyche (New Zealand)	1898	4-in.	2,135	20.5
Pyramus (New Zealand)	1897	4-in.	2,135	20.5
AUSTRIAN.				
Kaiserin-Elisabeth ..	1890	6-in.	4,060	19
RUSSIAN.				
Askold	1900	6-in.	6,500	23
Gunboats, Sloops, etc.:[3]				
JAPANESE.				
Mogami	1907	4.7-in.	1,329	23
Yodo	1907	4.7-in.	1,230	22
Chihaya	1900	4.7-in.	1,250	21
Tatsuta	1894	4.7-in.	875	21
BRITISH.				
Protector (Australian)	1884	6-in.	920	14
FRENCH.				
Kersaint	1897	5.5-in.	1,243	15
Zélée	1899	3.9-in.	680	13.5
GERMAN.				
Geier	1894	4.1-in.	1,630	17
Planet	1905	1.5-in.	650	10
Komet	1911	1 pr. Hotchkiss	977	16

[3] The crews of the British unprotected special-service ships *Shearwater* and *Algerine*, and of the German gunboats *Tiger*, *Luchs*, and *Cormoran* at Tsingtao, were used for manning other ships. The German gunboat *Jaguar* was at Shanghai.

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APPENDIX No. 8.

ENEMY VESSELS CAPTURED IN AUSTRALIAN PORTS.

Steamers detained in Port Jackson at outbreak of war:—
German-Australian Line.—*Melbourne, Osnabrück, Sumatra.*
Hansa Co.—*Stolzenfels.*
C. Andersen's Line.—*Tiberius.*
Jaluit Co.—*Germania.*

Detained at Newcastle:—
Oceana Line.—*Wotan.*

Detained in Port Phillip:—
North German Lloyd Line.—*Pfalz.*

Detained at Brisbane:—
German-Australian Line.—*Cannstatt.*
North German Lloyd Line.—*Prinz Sigismund.*

Detained at Port Huon:—
German-Australian Line.—*Oberhausen.*

The following vessels reached Australian ports after the outbreak of war, and were seized on arrival:—

Aug. 5. *Scharzfels* (Hansa Line), at Port Adelaide.
6. *Greifswald* (North German Lloyd), at Fremantle.
11. *Hobart* (German-Australian), at Port Phillip Heads.
15. *Lothringen* (North German Lloyd), at Melbourne.
18. *Wildenfels* (Hansa), at Port Phillip Heads.
21. *Berlin* (German-Australian), at Sydney, and *Altona* (same line), at Melbourne.
23. *Signal* (M. Jebsen), at Brisbane.

Sept. 3. *Hessen* (North German Lloyd), at Melbourne.

The Austrian vessel *Turul*, of the Hungarian Levant Co., was detained in Port Jackson on August 7th, after the declaration of war against Austria. The *Neumünster* (German-Australian) and *Thüringen* (North German Lloyd) were captured on the high seas by the *Pioneer*, and brought to Fremantle. Five sailing-ships must be added to the list—the *Athene*, detained in Port Jackson; the *Carl Rudgert Vinnen*, *Susanne Vinnen*, and *Olinda*, detained at Newcastle; and the *Ernst*, which on the 11th of November, ninety-nine days after the declaration of war, came placidly in through Port Jackson Heads.

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APPENDIX No. 9.

ENEMY VESSELS CAPTURED BY AUSTRALIAN WARSHIPS IN THE BISMARCK ARCHIPELAGO, SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER, 1914.

Sept. 11. *Sumatra* (584 tons), N.D.L. Co., by *Australia* off Cape Tawui.

13. *Madang* (194 tons), New Guinea Co., by *Protector* off Herbertshöhe.

14. *Nusa* (64 tons), Government yacht, by *Warrego* at Käwieng.

23. *Meklong* (438 tons), N.D.L. Co., by *Parramatta* at Duke of York Islands.

Brass Monkey, motor-launch belonging to Wesleyan Mission, but seized by Germans to act as tender to *Meklong*, by *Parramatta* at Duke of York Islands.

Oct. 18. *Siar* (450 tons), New Guinea Co., by *Nusa* at Gardner Island.

Matupi and *Senta*, motor-schooners, seized at same time and place.

25. *Samoa* (300 tons), D.H. & P. Co., by *Madang* at Kalili Bay.

The *Lorengau* and *Carola*, motor-ketches belonging to the Government, and the *Maski*, a motor-launch belonging to the New Guinea Co., were seized at Rabaul.

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APPENDICES—PART II.

CONDUCT OF OPERATIONS, ETC.

No. 10.

GERMAN INSTRUCTIONS TO SHIPPING IN CASE OF WAR.

(*Instructions to Vessels as to Their Conduct in a Naval War,* and the *Strictly Confidential and Secret* supplement.)

The *Instructions to Shipping* consist entirely of a statement of the principles of international law governing neutrality, prizes, blockade, and contraband. It is noteworthy that in regard to contraband the classification laid down in the Declaration of London is quoted in full, without any warning that the Declaration was not actually recognised as international law.

The "Streng vertraulich und geheim"[1] Supplement, which was issued on the 30th of May, 1912, is more interesting in detail. It begins thus:

> "Although there is absolutely no reason to assume that Germany will in the near future be engaged in war with a Greater Power —on the contrary, it may be confidently believed that, as happened last year, not only the German Government but also foreign Governments will take care that war does not break out between principal nations—yet it has been considered worth while to collect the following recommendations, which will be of interest to shipping if a war should happen."

Then follow a note on the "three-mile limit" and a recommendation to make very sure of being within it. Next comes an interesting essay on neutral ports, for which a German master should make directly he gets reliable information that Germany has been attacked:

> "War with Holland, Belgium, Spain, and Portugal may be considered out of the question. The ports of these countries and their colonies are therefore specially worth consideration when neutral ports are in question.
>
> In the Mediterranean (leaving out of account the Suez Canal) endeavours should be made to reach ports belonging to Turkey, Greece, and, possibly, Italy.
>
> In the Atlantic Ocean the Canaries, the Cape Verde group, and the Azores would be worth considering; in the South Atlantic Brazil or Portuguese South-West Africa, especially the port of St. Paul de Loanda.

[1] "Strictly confidential and secret."

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Vessels that happen to be in or near South African ports should run for Delagoa Bay if on the outward journey, for the Cape Verde Islands (if possible) when on the journey home.

Vessels in Australian waters should try to reach the Dutch Indies. If they have coal enough, they should avoid the Torres Strait route and go south-about, outside Tasmania, if possible. If they have not enough coal, they are recommended to stay quietly in port, or to run for the port where the best and most economical shelter is to be had—Sydney—and stay there. If the authorities insist on their leaving port, it may then be possible to get coal enough to reach a neutral port (as previously mentioned) without being immediately chased and caught by the enemy.

Vessels making for home *viâ* the Suez Canal should try to reach Marmagao Harbour in Portuguese Goa, or possibly Brewa in Italian Somaliland (about 1° N.). . . .

Vessels with all or most of their cargo on board, which can carry enough coal to take them home *viâ* South America, should take that route. To enter the Straits of Magellan a pilot should be taken as far as Punta Arenas, and another from there on. Charts for the onward voyage could presumably be procured at Punta Arenas.

A vessel that happened to be off the Western Australian coast, and have coal enough to reach the Cape Verde Islands *viâ* the Cape of Good Hope, might take that route.

In these deviations from the regular course especial care must be taken (*a*) to avoid the usual steamer-tracks as much as possible, (*b*) to keep well away from enemy coasts, (*c*) where possible, to enter by night the port that one is making for—further, to make the port as nearly as possible at right angles to the coastline.

In selecting the neutral port to be made for, care must be taken to choose (if possible) one in which at the end of the war coal can be got without its having to be brought there by sea first, *e.g.*, Padang, Delagoa Bay, and on the South American coast, possibly Coronel.

With reference to speeds, it is recommended to proceed at normal full speed in waters not safe from enemy attacks—if circumstances demand it, at even greater speed—but, in areas where no enemy attack is expected, to proceed at economic speed, since at the conclusion of peace coal will be scarce everywhere, and in any case dear. . . ."

While the *Instructions* were published and openly circulated by the Hamburg Shipowners' Union, the *Secret* supplement was circulated by the German-Australian S.S. Company to its own masters only, to be returned to the company—not passed on to a successor—whenever a master resigned or was dismissed.

On these recommendations very little comment need be made. The distrust of Italy is evident, also the basic assurance that Britain at least will be one of the hostile powers; but the neutrality of Portugal is pre-supposed too confidently.

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APPENDIX No. 11.

THE CAPTURE OF S.S. *PFALZ*

The following account of the seizure of the German steamer *Pfalz* at Port Phillip Heads on the outbreak of war was compiled by the authorities of the Australian War Memorial after conference with the pilot, Captain Robinson:—[1]

At the end of July, 1914, the s.s. *Pfalz* was at Melbourne. Her agents and captain, being aware that hostilities were threatening, had her ready for sea on the evening of the 4th of August; ostensibly she was bound for Sydney, but actually it was intended to take her to a South American port. At the last minute, however, her departure was delayed in order that she might take in an additional 200 tons of coal. This was loaded during the night of the 4th, and early next morning the vessel left her moorings, but owing to the congestion of traffic in the Yarra she was delayed in getting clear of the river. She steamed slowly down to the Heads (her captain having resolved to conserve his coal to the greatest extent possible) in charge of Captain Robinson of the Port Phillip Pilot Service.

The *Pfalz* arrived off Portsea at about 10 a.m. A launch then came alongside with an officer of the Examination Service, which, when war seemed imminent, was established under the control of the Naval Board, its object being to provide a patrol to guard the entrance to the port and to examine all inward- and outward-bound vessels. When the *Pfalz* was examined, advice of the outbreak of war had not been received, so there was no legitimate reason for stopping her, and she was given leave to proceed. Some German consular officials, who had not previously made their appearance on deck, then came on to the bridge, and they and the ship's captain displayed great jubilation. Meanwhile the vessel had turned in the tide, and Captain Robinson was engaged in swinging her round.

Between the departure of the Examination Service launch from the Portsea jetty to inspect the *Pfalz* and its return, advice of the outbreak of war had reached the Heads. It was telephoned to Fort Nepean, and signals were hoisted calling upon the vessel to stop. These, however, were not observed by Captain Robinson, whose attention was concentrated upon getting her through the Heads. The first intimation he had that anything untoward had happened was the report of one of the Fort Nepean guns, followed by the splash of the shell close to the *Pfalz's* stern (a departure from the customary shot across the bows[2]). He immediately telegraphed to the engine-room "Full speed astern." The captain at once countermanded this by ordering "Full speed ahead." For a time the pilot and the master struggled for control of the engine-room telegraph, Captain Robinson explaining to the German that it was useless to resist, as the next shot from the fort would hit his vessel. He thereupon submitted. The rapid change from elation at his presumable escape to the realisation of certain capture must have been very trying to a young man on his first voyage in command.

The *Pfalz* was brought back to Portsea, where both ship and crew were placed under arrest. Shortly afterwards she was taken to Williamstown by Captain Robinson, and remained there for about five months, when the Commonwealth Government put her in commission.

[1] Capt. M. Robinson. Pilot; of Williamstown, Vic.; b. Bendigo, Vic., 1 Jan., 1867.
[2] In this comment Captain Robinson is in error. The shot was fired, as usual, across the steamer's bows, but the angle of fire resulted in its striking the water some distance away on her starboard quarter.

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APPENDIX No. 12.

GERMAN DIARIES FOUND AT RABAUL.

It may be interesting to consider the raid on Rabaul, and the circumstances in which it took place, from a German point of view. When a few weeks later Rabaul was finally occupied by Australian forces, the diaries of two German officials were discovered and preserved; and their contents not only disclose the actual situation at the time of the raid, but give an interesting picture of life in a small isolated enemy settlement in war-time, and throw some light on the question how far the Berlin authorities had prepared for war and had forewarned their subordinates abroad.

The less detailed of the two diaries is that written by a minor official in the Government service, Kerler by name. Its contents are mostly copies of Government notices and of press messages received by the wireless station from Yap or Tsingtao; but one or two dramatic touches make the man human:—

> The declaration of war arrived here on 5/8/14, 10.15 p.m. at the post-office.
>
> The declaration of war became known in the evening. Midnight. Conference lasting two or three hours. Government and Treasury removed to Toma. All cash was accounted for. . . .

PROCLAMATION OF 6/8/14, 9 A.M.

> War has broken out between the German Empire on the one side, and England, France, and Russia on the other.
>
> The Protectorate finds itself in a state of war.
>
> The military forces of the Protectorate consist of the Expeditionary Force and the Europeans attached to it. The distinctive mark of membership of the military forces is the wearing of a green band on both upper arms, or the wearing of a military head-dress with an Imperial cockade.
>
> The police forces of the outstations, and that section of the Rabaul police-force which is to remain there for the maintenance of peace and safety, do not belong to the military forces. Their distinguishing badge is a white band on each upper arm, and white cap-covers.
>
> The seat of Government is removed to Toma.

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The militia had its little difficulties:—

CALL TO ARMS!

6/8/14, 10.30 a.m.—All soldiers at present on furlough are ordered to report at the Government Offices at 4 p.m. to the senior officer for the time being, First-Lieutenant Berghausen.

2-3 p.m.—Sharpening my sword.

4 p.m.—Parade. A single troop formed of 29-30 men. Articles of war read. Cheers for the Kaiser.

At 7 a.m. on 7/8/14 the troop falls in, and is given leave till 3 p.m. (Berghausen didn't turn up). The European troops must ration themselves for eight days. Rifles to be brought where possible.

Among other notices, discontinuing private telegraphic and telephonic traffic from the afternoon of the 6th, prohibiting the departure of vessels lying in Blanche Bay, forbidding "Chinese, Malays, and natives" to carry weapons, etc., is one of special interest:—

NOTICE.

English, French, and Russians at present in the Rabaul district are forbidden to leave their dwellings or the town limits respectively until further orders. In urgent cases, the permission of the District Officer must be obtained.

This rather clumsy phrasing meant that residents inside the town limits might move about within them freely, but all outside those limits must stay at home. This comparative freedom was of short duration; on the 7th a false alarm that an enemy ship was approaching caused the arrest of all Englishmen (Messrs Jolley,[1] Louri, Miller,[2] and two Whitemans) and their deportation to Vlavolo on the shores of Talili Bay. On the 9th, however, they were brought back. The alarm of the 7th also caused the issue of a local notice "that upon the approach of the enemy or upon the landing of any enemy force, no opposition is to be made." This restriction, it must be noted, was signed by the local District Officer, Tölke, and applied only to his particular district.

[1] Jolley subsequently enlisted in the A.I.F., serving with the 4th and 58th Bns. (Capt. F. R. Jolley. British Consul for German New Guinea; of Sydney and Rabaul; b. Prahran, Vic., 3 Jan., 1883.)

[2] Miller subsequently received commissioned rank in the A.N. & M.E.F. (Lieut. F. J. Miller. Accountant; of Sydney; b. Marrickville, N.S.W., 24 Sept., 1879. Died of illness, at Rabaul, 16 Feb., 1918.)

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The description of the raid is brief but dramatic:—

12/8/14.—At 6.45 a.m. three destroyers (Australian) entered. The *Warrego* tied up to the jetty. "Where is Mr. Whiteman? Where is the wireless station? Where the ——— is everything?" Inquiries for beer and flour. Schuppert was caught in the *Talasea* (two shots). At 2 p.m. the *Warrego* came back and destroyed the post-office. Besides the three destroyers there were apparently two battleships (*Australia* and *New Zealand*)[3] and one other large ship there.

12-13th.—On night ride to Toma.

On the 16th Kerler made a pencil-note, "Rumoured that Australia will send troops." The rest of his diary consists of multiscript or typescript copies of the usual press messages of the time—great sea-fights in the North Sea, "Rumours of an imminent conflict between America and Japan," "At Ghent the Crown Prince is said to have fallen," "Kaiser Franz Joseph lies on his deathbed."

The other diarist is much more free of speech and full of detail, and his comments on the progress of the wireless station explain a good deal. He was a post-office official of sorts, and keen on his job; when he tries to narrate how the party from the *Warrego* broke up his switchboards and table-sets and electric bells, his writing becomes pathetically illegible:—

28 July, 1914.—Rumours spreading that Austria has sent an ultimatum to Serbia, and that Germany has addressed a demand to Russia that warlike preparations on the Austrian frontier shall be stopped.

29 July.—At the wireless station at Bitapaka, now in building, emergency antennæ have been fitted to the 45-metre[4] tower, and the station is getting ready to receive wireless messages.

1 August.—S.M.S. *Planet* is off to Yap. The Bitapaka wireless station on duty every night from 10 to 12. War between Serbia and Austria.

10 p.m.—Discussion with the Government. Decided to withhold as yet the notice that, on account of war or common danger, mail matter will be received only at sender's risk.[5]

5 August.—Bitapaka caught an official telegram for Angaur, to the effect that Kiaochao will take no more cypher telegrams; deferred messages are no longer permitted, and telegrams should be routed *viâ* Guam. . . .

[3] Eyes that mistook the *Sydney* for the *New Zealand*, even across Blanche Bay, were not very steady. The *Talasea* was the schooner the *Australia* had stopped.

[4] About 150 feet.

[5] This notice was practically an intimation that war was imminent, and it was undesirable to disturb the minds of the native population till the very last moment.

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The district administration has established on Matupi an observation post to report the arrival of vessels. Communication at night by Nos. 4 and 1.[6] Posts are established on Matupi, the North and South Daughters, and the Mother, as well as in Herbertshöhe. An expeditionary force is to occupy the wireless station now in building at Bitapaka.

At 10.15 p.m.—Telegram to the Governor, Rabaul, Nauru. War with England, France, and Russia confirmed. Telegraph Receiving Office, Central.

6 August.—Cessation of all public telephone services and of the reception of telegrams. . . .

The Government is transferred to Toma.

At 4 p.m. mobilisation of all persons liable for service, and formation of a defence force of 40 persons. All vessels are requisitioned for defence purposes. The N.D.L. steamers *Sumatra* and *Meklong* depart, destination unknown.

7 August.—Establishment of a field-post for the militia and the expeditionary force. False alarm at 3.15 p.m. A vessel enters St. George's Channel. All Englishmen arrested and kept in custody—not known where.

The defence force encamps at Malagunan. . . .

8 August.—An intercepted English message deals with Kieta, Bougainville, *Scharnhorst*, *Gneisenau*.[7]

10 August, 10 p.m.—To Rabaul at midday came information that a strange vessel was approaching, which was signalled to as a phosphate steamer from Nauru. The steamer cruised for a long time in St. George's Channel, and then disappeared again. Alarm in Rabaul about the attitude of the Chinese (lack of work, threatening lack of food). Have therefore arranged for all my native "boys" to sleep on the verandah. No arms, only spears from St. Matthias and a bow and arrows. Sebau[8] has put on a singlet, buckled on a life-belt—Heaven help us!—and taken a postman's cap and a bow and arrows.

11 August.— . . . The wireless station at Bebra[9] can now operate (25 horse-power motor got from Komine).

12 August.—A telephone message from the planters at Put-put says that several ships have been seen cruising in St. George's Channel and off the east[10] coast of southern New Mecklenburg. At 5.30 a.m. Herbertshöhe sends news that an English fleet (one battleship, two large cruisers and one small one, and three torpedo-boats) have appeared in the roadstead off Herbertshöhe. At 7 o'clock three torpedo-boats appear in Simpsonshafen and inquire about Whiteman and Bebra. Again at 9 o'clock a boat comes to

[6] Probably referring to Government cyphers.
[7] This was a message wirelessed *en clair* from the s.s. *Kulambangra*, giving rumours current in Bougainville about a proposed peace-time visit of the German squadron.
[8] Apparently the head "boy."
[9] *See p. 92.*
[10] So in original, but probably meant for "west."

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shore, and lands five officers (the Admiral[11] among them) and twelve armed sailors. The District Officer is searchingly questioned; he denies any knowledge of the position of the wireless station. The Australian fleet threatens to bombard Rabaul if the wireless station does not immediately stop working. Still connection with "Samoa."[12] At 10 o'clock Herbertshöhe informs us that a torpedo-boat is landing men. At 10.30 line broken. . . .

At 2 p.m. the torpedo-boat *Warrego* again lands three officers, six men, and two mechanics. The post-office is occupied; a switchboard with fifty shutters, other switchboards, a gross of electric bells, . . .[13] table-sets, . . . switchboards for . . . lines utterly destroyed, and the installation cable cut. Half-an-hour later the English leave again, promising to spare private property. Rabaul is not to be bombarded. . . . The situation is serious. In a letter to the Governor, whose whereabouts also has not been betrayed, a demand is made that the wireless station should cease working immediately, otherwise the unfortified places Rabaul and Herbertshöhe will be bombarded. The Governor has ordered the District Officer to bring the women and children during the night into a safe place. All the Englishmen are under guard in Namanula.[14] Lieutenant-General Wylde has tried to get into communication with the English troops, although he has, it is alleged, given his word of honour not to do anything against German interests. . . .

13 August.—The English-Australian fleet has disappeared. In Herbertshöhe the attempt was made, by threats of severe treatment, to get some news about the wireless station. (Father Dicks threatened with a revolver; "ultimatum" till 6 p.m.; if no information, Herbertshöhe to be bombarded.) The ultimatum had not yet expired when the English at half-past four assembled and left Herbertshöhe roadstead. Strength: four cruisers, three torpedo-boats.

The post-office as well as the telegraph-instrument room was thoroughly ransacked, and everything within reach was destroyed. The private residence of the line-overseer was broken into, and valuables worth 400 marks were stolen.

Herbertshöhe has connection with Bebra and Samoa, and with Rabaul also since 12 noon. . . .

No news from the seat of war (Yap apparently destroyed).

14 August.— . . . The *Siar* and *Komet* returned. After taking in coal, both left again to get into safety. At Mioko a ship's wreckage has been washed ashore: a cabin, broken oars, a small red buoy, a cap with the inscription H.M.S. *Encounter*.

After summarising various press telegrams, the postmaster continues on August 16th:—

. . . Picture-show manager Lembach and road-engineer Muecke allotted to postal service (Muecke and Kleppek for outdoor work, Weller, Koenig, and Lembach for work at the instruments).

[11] It was actually Commander Cumberlege.
[12] Code name for the force near Toma. *See p. 92.*
[13] Dots represent illegibility.
[14] On the hill near Government House.

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Line interrupted at 2 o'clock, wire being broken by fall of a tree at 8k. Line in working order again on the 17th. All the English have been sent to Batze in the Bainings, except Lieutenant-General Wylde, who is in custody in St. Paul. More press news about the *Goeben* and the *Von der Tann* (Constantinople). The English are said to have landed 100,000 men in Belgium.

Telegraph lines have been laid to Paparatava and Tobera, and direct communication established between Tobera and Bitapaka and Herbertshöhe and Bitapaka (New Guinea Co.).

17 August.—Nothing new.

18 August.—No press telegrams. Yap ceased transmitting.

Nauru and Apia still working.

Line interrupted since 2 o'clock. Great earth-tremor at Barawon. The line is completely destroyed for 400 metres by bamboos slipping down on it. Interruption cleared away 11 a.m. on the 19th.

The field station was dismantled at 4 o'clock and temporarily withdrawn to the post-office.

19 August.—Nothing new from seat of war.

Surveyor Dulk and Assistant-Surveyor Dreibholz arrived from Namatanai and placed themselves at the disposal of the postal authorities. Muecke will stay in Rabaul till the 21st. The installation of a new district telephone net is in hand.

20 August.—A new telephone exchange is being got ready in the Works office building.

21 August.—Line to Herbertshöhe interrupted 8 a.m. Muecke sent off; at 1 p.m. Kleppek sent off; line restored about 2 o'clock.

22 August.—Press news: The German advance through Belgium is being carried out according to plan. The Belgians are retreating on Antwerp. Brussels much disturbed by the thunder of guns close at hand. War imminent between Japan and America. Belgrade fallen. Austrians have crossed the Rhine with large forces, including mountain artillery (to strengthen the front). German losses at Liège 5,000 men. North Sea sown with mines.

Later press news:—

Proclamation of the Kaiser to the Imperial Chancellor, from which one concludes that the war is not offensive on our part. . . . Mails from Finschhafen, Morobe, Friedrich Wilhelmshafen. Hoyer informs me that he is still at work on the telephone net.

Mail from Käwieng (Irene) and Namatanai (through Yalu).

The "Amtsblatt" issued.

23 August.—Alarm given that a warship is cruising off the Mother (6 a.m.). Turns out to be the little steamer *Gabriel* belonging to the Catholic Mission.

Six table-sets arrived from Friedrich Wilhelmshafen.

24 August.—Telephone net Rabaul re-opens with eight lines: No. 1 Government Office, 2 District Office, 3 Camp, 4 European Hospital, 5 Native Hospital, 6 Dr. Wick, 7 Chemist, 8 District Officer.

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25 August.—Press news: Belgium occupied by large German forces which have penetrated almost to the North Sea. Brussels and Ghent occupied. Official information received by the German Ambassador at Washington states that the Germans have won a brilliant victory over the French between Metz and the Vosges. L. A. Kleppek to Herbertshöhe with six men to repair the telephone line. Telephone station at Raluana installed by Hoheisel.

26 August.—Information (a rumour) that Japan tried to land 10,000 men at Tsingtau but was stopped by the United States.

27 August.—The *Madang* arrived from Friedrich Wilhelmshafen, and the *Samoa* from Samoa.

Hoyer informs me that the District Officer at Friedrich Wilhelmshafen wants to send to Germany *viâ* the Dutch Indies all persons liable for military service. The *Siar* is probably going to the Dutch Indies. . . .

29 August.—From Tsingtau. The Japanese Admiral Kato has informed Waldeck that a blockade of Tsingtau has begun. Within twenty-four hours neutral ships and non-combatants must leave the town, as bombardment both by land and sea will then follow.

30 August.—The *Siar* left at 8.30, apparently for Friedrich Wilhelmshafen, Humboldt Bay (Dutch Indies), and Makassar. She took no mails.

Press news: Belgian divisions put to flight; great rejoicing in Berlin over the victory.

31 August.—Nothing new.

1 September.—Buka natives say that the cruiser *Encounter* has been sunk off Buka by a big ship with many funnels. Many natives of the British Solomons are said to have been taken on board by this vessel.

2 September.—Rumour spread that Tsingtau has fallen, and that Togo has been captured by a Liberian gunboat with an English crew. The Government wants to know if we can spare bronze wire for a 30-k. line. Probably a line is to be built from Toma far into the interior of Baining. Apia has sent no messages for two days. Intense wireless activity—Japanese, American, and English ships. In case we get no more answers from Nauru, the Government will be moved from Toma and a new wireless tower built of wood.

3 September.—The Government has again taken 300,000 marks to Toma, as Mrs. Möller (wife of the commander of the *Komet*[15]) threatens to betray to the English when they arrive that the Government had handed over its funds to the business houses. Kleppek back from Herbertshöhe.

4 September.—Consultation with Councillor Schlettwein about arrangements for sending mails *viâ* the Dutch Indies. The reason why the *Siar* had not been compelled to carry mails could not yet be determined.

5 September.—Steamer *Madang* arrives with important news from S.M.S. Administrator Ehemann informs me that he intends going in the *Kalili* to the Dutch Indies, and will take mails.

[15] An Englishwoman. This statement is not necessarily correct. *See also p. 118.*

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6 September.—Long press telegram with important war news. Causes of the war; great seafight at Leith (Hull), four *Dreadnoughts* (perhaps of latest design) sunk; Roumania armed neutrality, Holland friendly neutrality, China against Japan; America intervening, sends Pacific fleet. *Lusitania* sunk; Libau bombarded by the *Augsberg;* Togo occupied by French and English; unrest in India and Saigon; united French and English fleet in Hong Kong. Yap destroyed on 12th August by the English cruisers *Minotaur* and *Newcastle.*

Issued for building material: 350 kilograms of 1½ mm. bronze wire; 220 insulators (III) with screw-props, 400 "saddle-clips" (for constructing telephone lines from Toma).

7 September.—The rumour runs that in Kiaochau German cruiser . . . has brought in a Russian auxiliary cruiser which was taken off Tsingtau, a big vessel, two-funnelled. Captain G. has gone with secret orders to Kiaochau.

8 September.—Mails for Dutch Indies and Germany per *Kalili* closed.

10 September.—Have arranged with Government-Councillor Lederer that L. A. Kleppek shall take over the construction of the line inland from Toma. Kleppek is making section-apparatus out of table sets.

11 September.—At 3 o'clock in the morning two destroyers run into the harbour. They leave Rabaul again. At 7 o'clock a boat cruises around (the *Yarra*) not far from the jetty, and lands sailors who break into the N.D.L. shed and *steal* a great deal. At their commander's instigation, however, they have to give back the booty.

Kleppek receives instructions to break in on the line to Herbertshöhe in the neighbourhood of the hospital.

At 10 o'clock the destruction of the district telephone net is completed. (The line to Herbertshöhe was interrupted at 7.15 a.m. Last news was that an English-Australian squadron of many vessels was approaching.) Raluana breaks up its telegraphic station at 7.30. At 1 p.m. the destroyer is relieved by a bigger one. All cutters are collected in the inner harbour behind the N.D.L. jetty. There is a rumour that the N.D.L. boat *Sumatra* has been caught. At 6 p.m. a small cruiser (old type), a submarine, and the *Sumatra* arrive. Searchlights on the harbour till 9 p.m. Books and registered letters, &c., brought into safety.

12 September.—At 10 a.m. a large cruiser with four funnels enters, apparently the *Melbourne* or *Sydney.* At 1 appear the battleship *Australia,* two submarines, a collier, an oil-tank steamer, and three transports. A large cruiser with three funnels is still lying off Vulcan Island.

The rumour is that Rabaul will be permanently occupied by the English-Australian fleet and used as a naval base. Nothing new from Herbertshöhe. It seems that troops have been landed there, and are marching inland *viâ* Ralum. News from the European seat of war: German troops are said to have advanced to within 25 km. of Paris. Seafight between English and Germans,

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in which the English lost two cruisers and the Germans three. The Russians are said to have reached Berlin (??) with five million (??) men.

At 3 o'clock the rest of the Australian fleet appears—a large cruiser and two transports. An officer from the *Australia* at 2 o'clock measured the N.D.L. jetty and took soundings. Apparently only two torpedo-boats are now left in Herbertshöhe.

The weather is very hot. A little rain on the 11th.

This, the only weather-note in the entire diary, is a fine gesture of indifference to the British occupation—almost equal to a Frenchman's "Je m'en fiche!"

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APPENDIX No. 13.

TRANSLATION OF INSTRUCTIONS FOUND ON LIEUTENANT KEMPF.[1]

21.8.14.

Sent off at 9 o'clock from Paparatava.

Telephone despatch from the Commander of the armed forces:—

Captain of Reserves Wuchert takes over the Bebra[2] force till otherwise ordered.

Lieutenant of Reserves Fiebig takes over the force at Paparatava, and at the same time the charge of the Government Archives.

Warrant-Officer of Reserves Zerssen, and Warrant-Officer of Reserves Weimer, are put at the disposal of the Bebra force.

The recently-arrived Naval Reserve Officer, Mr. Schmidt, will take over the post at Raluana.

Warrant-Officer of Reserves Augar will be at the disposal of the Commander of the armed forces in Paparatava, Lance-Corporal of Reserves Kosher at the disposal of the Lüttich force.

(Sub-Commander) VON KLEWITZ.

To—

Lieutenant Kempf

[1] *See p. 87.* [2] For Bebra and Lüttich, *see p. 92.*

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APPENDIX No. 14.

THE GERMAN CRUISER SQUADRON AT PAPEETE.

The following is a summary of a narrative by Claude Farrère and Paul Chack (*Combats et Batailles sur Mer*), based on numerous official and private documents of the time:—

When on the 21st of September von Spee anchored off Bora-Bora, he flew no flag and gave orders that only officers speaking French or English should receive visitors. Soon afterwards two Europeans, the "brigadier de gendarmerie" in charge of the island and a local settler, came off to interview the new arrivals. On the deck they found two officers volubly arguing in English, one of whom asked in French: "What news of the war?" "None, captain," said the brigadier; "We heard from a visiting English vessel that you had declared war on Germany, but I don't know if France has joined in or not." "Oh, France is in it," said the pseudo-Englishman; "Indeed, I fear that the enemy squadron may have already captured Papeete, where we hope to coal. Can you tell us anything?" On that, of course, the brigadier launched out into a full description of the defencelessness of Papeete; the gunboat *Zélée*, he said, was moored in the harbour, but her guns were ashore and were the only artillery the French had there—as for a garrison, there were 25 colonial infantry and 20 *gendarmes*. But the stock of coal was large, the settler informed them, since, in addition to the 5,000 tons always kept in stock, 3,000 had just been taken from a captured German collier. Still under the impression that they were entertaining English cruisers, the Bora-Borans provisioned the ships to the best of their ability, and it was not until he left port that von Spee acknowledged the brigadier's farewell salute by hoisting German colours.

Meanwhile at Papeete, Lieutenant Destremau, the commander of the *Zélée*, had long since taken what precautions he could. Left by his government in ignorance of all military or naval details, he feared an attack from the *Geier* or the *Cormoran*, which he supposed to be at Apia. He landed most of the *Zélée's* guns (four 2½-inch, one 4-inch) and placed them in battery on a hill about 300 feet above the town; he collected all the French reservists in the group and raised a volunteeer corps of Tahitians; with the *Zélée* and her one remaining 4-inch gun he went off to Makatea and captured the German vessel *Walküre*, which was loading phosphates there. (This was the "collier" the settler had spoken of.) He then mined the beacons that guide vessels through the reef (the Governor would not let him blow them up), dug trenches across the roads east and west, and established observation-posts round the island and another, with a beacon, on Moorea northwards.

At dawn on the 22nd of September the Moorea beacon-fires were sighted above a heavy fog, which lifted at 6.30 a.m. and disclosed the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* about nine miles off shore. Destremau immediately ordered his subordinates to blow up the guiding beacons, fire the stock of coal, get up steam aboard the *Zélée*, and sink her in the passage through the reef either before or after the enemy

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ships had traversed it. As soon as the cruisers were within a mile of the reef, the battery fired three warning salvoes, and von Spee broke the German flag. His launches, with steam up, could be discerned at the catheads; but, instead of at once attempting the passage, he steered along the outside of the reef, meanwhile signalling vehemently to his squadron. The salvoes from the unsuspected battery made him cautious, and for more than an hour he patrolled the reef in the hope of discovering its emplacement when he should reopen fire.[1] Destremau knew too much to do that until his enemy was actually inside the reef. About 7.45 a.m. the cruisers opened a searching fire on the hills without success, and about 8 o'clock seemed to be making for the entrance; Destremau therefore ordered that the *Zélée* (which always took three hours to get up steam, and was consequently immovable) should be sunk at her moorings. But von Spee had come to the conclusion that Papeete was not worth the risk of losing his men; the battery's strength and situation were still undiscovered, the French flag still defied him both from the mast of the sinking *Zélée* and from the tallest building in the town, and the coal (which after all was the one thing he needed) was burning merrily. He decided to let well alone; but before leaving, to impress the natives, maybe, he proceeded to put forty-nine shells into the place, two of which helped to sink the *Zélée*.

[1] The German official narrative states that a rain-storm lying over the land prevented the squadron from immediately observing the position of this battery. Its fire prevented him from attempting a peaceful entry.

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APPENDIX No. 15.

THE RAID ON FANNING ISLAND BY THE *NÜRNBERG*.

In the morning of the 7th of September residents at the cable station on Fanning Island saw two vessels coming up over the horizon. As they approached it was seen that both flew the French flag, and preparations were made to launch a boat and guide them to the regular anchorage. Meanwhile the operator on duty reported to his next neighbour at Suva, "I can see a three-funnelled cruiser in the distance," and then "She is coming nearer, flying the French flag."

Just as the boat was launched, two boats put off hurriedly from the strange cruiser, came shoreward at full speed, and landed a body of German officers and marines. The residents in sight were captured; a Maxim gun was trained on the cable station, which was then entered and most of the instruments in the operating room smashed; the shore end of the cable was dynamited, and further out to sea the cable was dredged for, secured, and cut. Then the engine-room, the lighting and refrigerating plant, and the dynamo-room were blown up with gun-cotton. Last of all the office was ransacked, and papers carried off for perusal.

It was unfortunate that no one at the office thought of destroying these papers before they were captured; for they revealed that several valuable instruments and a quantity of arms and ammunition were buried on the island. These were now discovered and destroyed, while £750 was taken from the office safe. No private property was touched. The whole raid took about twelve hours.[1]

The collier is described as "of the Three Islands type, about 2,200 tons."

The population of Fanning Island was then 26 white men, 4 white women, and about 200 natives.

(*Summarised from a Honolulu paper of 3rd October, 1914.*)

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[1] The German official narrative (*Der Kreuzerkrieg, Vol. I, p. 129*) does not materially differ, except that the two signals sent out by the wireless operator are given as follows: "Suspicious ship in sight," and "Suspicious ship is French cruiser, I am going on board." The sum taken is said to have been £720 2s. 6d. The *Titania*, which had a cable-cutting apparatus, was responsible for that part of the work.

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APPENDIX No. 16.

EXTRACTS FROM CONVOY NAVAL ORDERS.

DEPARTURE OF CONVOY.

Transports will proceed independently from their ports of embarkation to King George's Sound, where the entire Convoy will assemble.

Ships will clear their final embarkation ports by noon on the following dates[1]:—

Brisbane	25th September.
Sydney	27th September.
Hobart	27th September.
Melbourne	29th September.
Adelaide	30th September.
Fremantle	2nd October.

Ships should in any case arrive at King George's Sound not later than 4 p.m. on 4th October.

STEAM OR MOTOR BOATS AT KING GEORGE'S SOUND.

The Sub-district Naval Officer, Albany, is to arrange for the hire of three steam or motor boats during the stay of the convoy in King George's Sound. These boats will be for the use of the Principal Transport Officer and the two Transport Officers, one of whom will be acting as Berthing Officer.

MASTHEAD HEIGHTS TO BE REPORTED.

To facilitate the taking of sextant angles for station-keeping purposes, masters of transports are required to ascertain and forward in writing as soon as possible to the Naval Secretary, Navy Office, Melbourne, the following information:—

(*a*) Height from mainmast head to waterline.
(*b*) Height from foremast head to waterline.
(*c*) Vertical height from mainmast head light to stern light.

The estimated mean waterline for the voyage should be taken.

If not already provided, arrangements should be made for a permanent position for a light (oil or electric) at the mainmast head.

ORGANISATION OF CONVOY.

The Convoy will be organised as follows:—

Transport No.	Name.	Tonnage.	Speed.	Remarks.
	1st Division.			
A 3	*Orvieto*	12,130	15	Flag of G.O.C.
A 27	*Southern*	4,769	10½	
A 4	*Pera*	7,635	11	
A 26	*Armadale*	6,153	11	
A 12	*Saldanha*	4,594	11	
A 13	*Katuna*	4,641	11	
A 1	*Hymettus*	4,606	11½	
A 23	*Suffolk*	7,573	12	
A 25	*Anglo-Egyptian*	7,379	12	
	2nd Division.			
A 18	*Wiltshire*	10,390	14	Division leader
A 7	*Medic*	12,032	13	
A 11	*Ascanius*	10,048	13	
A 15	*Star of England*	9,150	13½	
A 2	*Geelong*	7,951	12	
A 17	*Port Lincoln*	7,243	12	
A 10	*Karroo*	6,127	12	
A 21	*Marore*	6,443	12½	
A 6	*Clan Maccorquodale* ..	5,058	12½	

[1] These dates were subsequently altered. *See chap. vi.*

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Transport No.	Name.	Tonnage.	Speed.	Remarks.
	3rd Division.			
A 14	*Euripides*	14,947	15	Division leader
A 8	*Argyllshire*	10,392	14	
A 9	*Shropshire*	11,911	14	
A 19	*Afric*	11,999	13	
A 24	*Benalla*	11,118	14	
A 22	*Rangatira*	10,118	14	
A 16	*Star of Victoria*	9,152	13½	
A 20	*Hororata*	9,491	14	
A 5	*Omrah*	8,130	15	
A 28	*Miltiades*	7,814	13	

GENERAL PROCEDURE OF CONVOY.

The Convoy will proceed at sea in three Divisions. The 1st Division in the centre, the 2nd Division to port and the 3rd Division to starboard of the 1st Division.

2. The ships of the Convoy have been organised in Divisions, which include as far as possible ships of equal speeds, the 1st Division including the slowest, and the 3rd Division the fastest vessels.

3. Leaders of Divisions will be abeam of the "ORVIETO," and one mile distant, unless otherwise ordered.

4. Ships in each Division will proceed in sequence of Fleet numbers, ships being four cables (800 yards) apart, unless otherwise ordered.

6. The magnetic course and speed which the "ORVIETO" intends to steer will be indicated by signal.

7. Leaders of Divisions should make such signals as may be necessary to their own Divisions.

8. Ships should in all cases follow in the wake of the next ship ahead, except to avoid collision or running into danger.

CONVOY PROCEDURE—STATION KEEPING.

The position of ships in the Convoy (800 yards from the next ahead) should be maintained by means of sextant angles. For this purpose a table of heights from mast heads to waterline, for all ships, is being prepared.

2. At night ships are to hoist a signal lamp at the mainmast head for the same purpose.

[Other paragraphs lay down procedure when altering course, forming single line, signalling, etc.]

USE OF WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY.

Wireless telegraphy will be used by the "ORVIETO" for communicating with the Escort, also at stated fixed times for the transmission of messages from the General Officer Commanding and the Senior Naval Officer to ships of the Convoy.

WIRELESS GENERAL SIGNALS.

Long general signals by day, and all general signals by night, will be made to the Convoy from "ORVIETO" by wireless telegraphy, if possible at the hours of 2, 6, and 10 a.m. and p.m.

3. At night . . . if the matter to be signalled is *urgent*, a red Very's light will be fired to call attention, and the syren may also be sounded, in which case the W/T message may be proceeded with without delay. In such cases the message will be made *en clair*.

5. Messages made by wireless telegraphy should be obeyed when received, with the exception that any signal requiring all ships to act simultaneously, such as an alteration of course together . . . or a change of speed, should be obeyed when the "ORVIETO" fires a white Very's light.

[Other paragraphs deal with particulars of transports, sailing dates, etc.]

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USE OF OIL NAVIGATION LIGHTS AND DARKENING SHIP.

In order to reduce the power of navigation lights as much as possible, oil illuminants should be used for this purpose by all transports.

2. Vessels should be prepared to darken ship at any time by lowering deadlights on all ships' side ports; and arrangements should be made so that all lights on the upper deck can be promptly turned out upon receipt of orders to do so from the bridge.

FLOATING MATERIAL NOT TO BE THROWN OVERBOARD AT SEA.

While at sea, care should be taken that no floating material is thrown overboard from ships in the Convoy. Wooden cases and casks should be broken up and burnt, and empty tins should be perforated before being thrown overboard, so as to ensure their sinking.

ON ENEMY BEING SIGHTED.

By Day—

Escort will attack.

"ORVIETO" will make necessary signal for keeping Convoy clear of enemy.

By Night—

Ship attacked will fire two rockets every five minutes and endeavour to escape, avoiding lines of Convoy.

Cruisers will attack enemy.

The remainder of the Convoy will extinguish all lights, navigational and otherwise, except shaded stern light, and continue on course.

After attack, the scattered ships will make for rendezvous.

TIME.

All time for assembling at rendezvous will be Greenwich mean time.

During passage ships are to keep apparent time.

"ORVIETO" will drop a time ball at 11 a.m. daily.

ORDER OF CRUISING BY NIGHT.

Ships will cruise in same order as by day.

No lights are to be shown outside ship, except oil side lights and a shaded stern light.

WIRELESS SIGNALS.

No wireless signals are to be made by the transports.

Ships will look out on different wave lengths as laid down by special enclosure, and will report visually any signals intercepted.

NAVIGATION ROUTES AND RENDEZVOUS.

Before leaving each port an enclosure will be issued giving proposed route, rendezvous, and time when Convoy will be at those rendezvous.

[Order 34 provides for a recognition signal to enable cruisers to identify ships of the Convoy at night when attacked by enemy.]

NEW ZEALAND TRANSPORTS.

The transports of the New Zealand Imperial Force, ten ships in all, are organised as follows:—

No.	Ship.	Speed.	Tonnage.	Master or Naval Transport Officer.
	1st Division.			
3	*Maunganui*	16	7,527	Com. Ward, R.N.
9	*Hawkes Bay* ..	12	6,800	Lt. Cooper, R.N.R.
8	*Star of India* ..	11	6,800	Lt. Varian, R.N.R.
7	*Limerick*	13	6,827	Lt. Williams, R.N.R.
4	*Tahiti*	17	7,585	Lt.-Com. Denniston, R.N.
	2nd Division.			
10	*Arawa*	12	9,372	Com. Newton, R.N.
11	*Athenic*	12	12,234	Lt. Porter, R.N.R.
6	*Orari*	13	7,207	Lt. Jenkins, R.N.R.
5	*Ruapehu*	13	7,885	Lt. Tonge, R.N.R.
12	*Waimana*	14	10,389	Lt. Glenny, R.N.

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APPENDIX No. 17.

AN OFFICER'S ACCOUNT OF THE *SYDNEY-EMDEN* ACTION.

The following account was printed in *The Times* of 15 December, 1914:—

"An officer on board H.M.A.S. *Sydney*, in a letter to his father, writes:—

'I will now give you some account of our action with the *Emden* on November 9 and some subsequent happenings on November 10 and 11.

'On November 9 we were steaming about 50 miles to the eastward of the Cocos Islands (south-west of Java), heading for Colombo, when at 7 a.m. we took in a very interrupted wireless message from the Cocos wireless station—"Strange ship . . . off entrance." The *Melbourne*, as senior officer, ordered us to raise steam for full speed and go and investigate.

'I was in my bath when Bell-Salter[1] came in with news that the enemy was within 40 miles of us. I, of course, took it for a "leg haul," but he soon convinced me, and the noise made by the propellers going at rapidly increasing speed soon left us in a state of great elation. It was, as far as I was concerned, quite sincere, though I had a half-formed thought at the back of my mind, wondering whether I might be knocked out. I am a little interested as to what other fellows were feeling, but it is a question I have never heard answered satisfactorily. Anyone I have heard speaking on the subject says, "O-o-oh yes, of course I was in an awful funk!" This usually from a most stolid and unimaginative-looking man. At any rate, although I had been a little livery the two previous days, I happened to feel as fit as a lark that morning, and at 7.30 a.m. sent for the barber and had my hair cut, to the accompaniment of no end of badinage from the surrounding cabins, which they got back in kind and with interest.

'At 9.15 a.m. the tops of the coconut trees of Keeling Islands were sighted. At 9.20 we sighted the *Emden*, or rather the tops of her funnels, 12 or 15 miles away. At 9.40 a.m. she opened fire at a very big range, and shortly after that we started in on her.

'Throughout the action I was almost constantly engaged running backwards and forwards between the ammunition hoist and the forecastle gun or between the hoist and No. 1 starboard or No. 1 port.

'The hottest part of the action for us was the first half-hour. We opened fire from our port guns to begin with. I was standing just behind No. 1 port, and the gunlayer (Atkins,[2] 1st Class Petty Officer) said, "Shall I load, sir?" I was surprised, but deadly keen there should be no "flap,"[3] so said, "No, don't load till you get the order." Next he said, "*Emden's* fired, sir." So I said, "All right, load, but don't bring the gun to the ready." I found out afterwards that the

[1] Commr. B. O. Bell-Salter; R.N.; b. Wyke Regis, Dorset, Eng., 28 March, 1888.
[2] C.P.O. B. J. Atkins (No. 8214; R.N.); b. Battersea, London, Eng., 1 Aug., 1878.
[3] *i.e.*, that there should be no undue excitement.

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order to load had been received by the other guns ten minutes before, and my anti-"flap" precautions, though they did not the slightest harm, were thrown away on Atkins, who was as cool as a cucumber throughout the action.

'Later I heard a crash and looking aft saw that a shell had hit near gun No. 2 starboard. But owing to the screen being in the way, I did not know it had knocked out practically the whole of that gun's crew. Not seeing any flame or smoke rising (we cope with the smallest fire immediately) I went on with my job. This required continual attention. The men are splendid at loading drill, but to practise supply of ammunition is almost impossible in peace time. To have a big supply stacked on the upper deck is far too dangerous a proceeding in action, and what with getting an even distribution of projectiles and cartridges between the two guns, getting the safety caps off, with fiddly pins and things to take out, attending to missfires, cheering up the one or two who seemed to be "pulling dry," you can imagine I had little time to be thinking much about the *Emden*. I noticed once or twice when going forward the starboard side to the forecastle gun that we seemed to be in the thick of it. There was a lot of "Wheee-oo, Wheee-oo, Wheee-oo," and the "But-but-but" of the shell striking the water beyond, and as the range was pretty big, this is quite possible since the angle of descent would be pretty steep.

'Coming aft, I heard a shot graze the top of the shield of No. 1 starboard. A petty officer now came up limping from aft, and said that he had just carried an officer below (he was not dangerously hit), and that the after-control position had been knocked right out and every one wounded (they were marvellously lucky). I told him if he was really able to carry on to go aft to No. 2 starboard and see there was no fire, and if there was that any charges about were to be thrown overboard at once. He was very game and limped away aft. He got aft to find a very bad cordite fire just starting. He with others got this put out. I later noticed some smoke rising aft, and ran aft to find that it was just the remains of what they had put out, but found two men, one with a badly wounded foot, sitting on the gun platform, and a petty officer lying on the deck a little further aft, with a nasty wound in his back. I found one of the men was unwounded, but badly shaken. However, he pulled himself together when I spoke to him, and told him I wanted him to do what he could for the wounded. I then ran back to my group.

'All the time we were going 25 and sometimes as much as 26 knots. We had the speed on the *Emden* and fought as suited ourselves. We next changed round to starboard guns and I then found the gunlayer of No. 1 starboard had been knocked out close to the conning tower, so I brought Atkins over to fire No. 1 starboard. I was quite deaf by now, as in the hurry there had been no thought of getting cotton-wool. This is a point I won't overlook next time.

'Coming aft the port side from the forecastle gun I was met by a lot of men cheering and waving their caps. I said, "What's happened?" "She's gone, sir, she's gone." I ran to the ship's side, and no sign of a ship could I see. If one could have seen a dark cloud of smoke, it would have been different. But I could see no sign of anything. So I called out, "All hands turn out the life-boats, there will be men in the water." They were just starting to

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do this when some one called, "She's still firing, sir," and everyone ran back to the guns. What had happened was a cloud of yellow or very light-coloured smoke had obscured her from view, so that looking in her direction one's impression was that she had totally disappeared. Later we turned again and engaged her on the other broadside.

'By now her three funnels and her foremast had been shot away, and she was on fire aft. We turned again, and after giving her a salvo or two with the starboard guns saw her run ashore on North Keeling Island. So at 11.20 a.m. we ceased firing, the action having lasted one hour forty minutes.

'Our hits were not very serious. We were "hulled" in about three places. The shell that exploded in the boys' mess deck, apart from ruining the poor little beggars' clothes, provided a magnificent stock of trophies. For two or three days they kept finding fresh pieces. The only important damage was the after-control platform, which is one mass of gaping holes and tangled iron, and the foremost rangefinder shot away. Other hits, though "interesting," "don't signify."

'We started chasing a collier which had been in attendance on the *Emden*, and when we boarded her we found they had opened the seacocks and the ship was sinking fast, so we took every one off her and returned to the *Emden*, getting back there at about 4 p.m.

'They sent a man aloft to cut down the colours, and waved a big white flag from forward. It was getting dark and we did not know for certain that the cruiser *Königsberg* might not be near, so we could do no rescue work that night and had to steam away. A cry in the darkness, and we stopped, and lifeboats were lowered to pick up a nearly exhausted but very lucky German sailor. The fourth rescued from the water that day.

'November 10.—Early in the morning we made for the cable station, to find that the party landed by the Germans to destroy the station had seized a schooner and departed. The poor devils aren't likely to go far with a leaking ship and the leathers removed from all the pumps. Although they had broken up all the instruments, the cable people had a duplicate set buried, so that was satisfactory.

'At 11.10 a.m. we arrived off the *Emden* again. I was sent over to her in one of the cutters. Luckily her stern was sticking out beyond where the surf broke, so that with a rope from the stern of the ship one could ride close under one quarter, with the boat's bow to seaward. The rollers were very big, and the surging to and fro and so on made getting aboard fairly difficult. However, the Germans standing aft gave me a hand up, and I was received by the captain of the *Emden*. I told him from our captain that if he would give his parole the captain was prepared to take all his crew on board the *Sydney* and take them straight up to Colombo. He stuck a little over the word "parole," but readily agreed when I explained the exact scope of it. And now came the dreadful job of getting the badly wounded into the boats. There were fifteen of these. Luckily we have a very good pattern of light stretcher into which men can be strapped. We got three badly wounded in each boat. The Germans were all suffering badly from thirst, so we hauled the boats' water-casks up on deck, and they eagerly broached them, giving the wounded some first.

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'I took an early opportunity of saluting the captain of the *Emden* and saying, "You fought very well, sir." He seemed taken aback, and said "No." I went away, but presently he came up to me and said, "Thank you very much for saying that, but I was not satisfied. We should have done better. You were very lucky in shooting away all my voice-pipes at the beginning."

'When I got a chance, with all the boats away, I went to have a look round the ship. I have no intention of describing what I saw. With the exception of the forecastle, which is hardly touched from forebridge to stern post, she is nothing but a shambles, and the whole thing was most shocking. The German doctor asked me to signal for some morphia, sent me aft, and I never came forward again.

'Of the German officers, Witthoeft, the torpedo lieutenant, was a thoroughly nice fellow. Lieutenant Schal was also a good fellow, and half English. It quite shook them when they found out that the captain had asked that there be no cheering on entering Colombo, but we certainly did not want cheering with rows of badly-wounded men laid out in cots on the quarter-deck. Captain von Müller is a very fine fellow.

'At Colombo we dropped all our wounded cargo, English and German. From the number of men we rescued—*i.e.*, 150—we have been able to reckon their losses. We know the number of men who landed at Cocos and got away, and the number of the prize crew in the collier. They cannot have lost less than 180 men killed, but 20 men badly wounded and about the same number slightly.

'There are lots of redeeming points in the whole show. Best of all was to see the gun's crew fighting their guns quite unconcerned. When we were last in Sydney we took on board three boys from the training ship *Tingira*, who had volunteered. The captain said, "I don't really want them, but as they're keen I'll take them." Now the action was only a week or two afterwards, but the two out of the three who were directly under my notice were perfectly splendid. One little slip of a boy did not turn a hair, and worked splendidly. The other boy, a very sturdy youngster, carried projectiles from the hoist to his gun throughout the action without so much as thinking of cover. I do think for two boys absolutely new to their work they were splendid.

'It was very interesting talking to some of the German officers afterwards. On the first day they were on board one said to me, "You fire on the white flag." I at once took the matter up, and the torpedo lieutenant and an engineer both said emphatically, "No, that is not so; you did not fire on the white flag." But we did not leave it at that. One of us went to the captain, and he got from Captain von Müller an assurance that we had done nothing of the kind, and that he intended to assemble his officers and tell them so.

'The day Captain von Müller was leaving the ship at Colombo, he came up to me on the quarter-deck and thanked me in connexion with the rescue of the wounded, shook hands and saluted, which was very nice and polite of him. I think, acting under their rules, he and his crew refused to give parole after their arrival at Colombo, but he conscientiously observed it while in the *Sydney*, which was more like a hospital ship than a man-of-war, while running to Colombo. Prince Hohenzollern was a decent enough fellow. In fact, we seemed to agree that it was our job to knock one another out, but there was no malice in it.'"

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APPENDIX No. 18.

THE LANDING ON COCOS.

[The following account of the German landing on Direction Island is extracted from a report by Superintendent Farrant, of the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company, who was in charge of the cable station at the time.]

"At 5.50 a.m. on the 9th I was informed that a warship with four funnels was steaming for the entrance between Horsborough and Direction Islands. Quickly investigating, and finding that the fourth funnel was palpably canvas, I found Mr. La Nauze and instructed him to proceed immediately to the wireless hut, and to put out a general call that there was a strange warship in our vicinity, asking for assistance and signing our naval code. At the same time I proceeded to the office and sent services, as previously instructed, to London, Adelaide, Perth, and Singapore.

"The *Emden* (for such she turned out to be) came in at a great speed nearly as far as our outer buoy, where she wheeled and disclosed an armoured launch and two heavily manned boats under her counter. They were immediately slipped, and speeded straight for the jetty. Through a glass we managed to distinguish four machine-guns, two in the launch and one on the bow of each boat. The information was conveyed to the aforementioned stations, and I personally told Singapore that it was the *Emden*. So quick had been their movements, evidently with the hope of rushing our wireless, that the slip of the last-mentioned services was passing through the 'Autos' when they entered the office.

"In the meantime Mr. La Nauze was putting out the call. I returned to the wireless hut, where he informed me that the *Emden* and her collier the *Buresk* were endeavouring to interrupt him. I instructed him to continue the call, as the fact of forcing the two ships to use their strong Telefunken notes could only be regarded as a matter for suspicion if picked up by a warship. I stood at the corner of the hut to assume responsibility for the use of the wireless, until an officer and some half-dozen blue-jackets ordered us to desist and leave. Armed guards ran to all buildings, and the office was taken possession of in force and the staff ordered out.

"Lieutenant von Mücke, in charge of the landing party, was exceedingly agreeable. He informed me that he had landed 3 officers and 40 men, and his instructions were to destroy the cable and wireless station. Further than this, he said, they would not go, and all private property would be respected. He instructed me to collect the staff and take them to a place of safety, as he was blowing up the wireless mast. Three charges had to be fired before it fell. The mainmast was considerably damaged; the top-mast appears unhurt, and a short length is broken off the top-gallant-mast. Instruments, engines, dynamos, batteries, etc., were all battered to pieces with huge axes. . . . The *Emden* was for a short time circling over the cables, but, evidently worried by our wireless, she almost immediately stood out to the entrance to watch for anything coming up.

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"The only question I was asked was the whereabouts of the cable ends; the answer 'in the sea' appeared to satisfy them, as I was not pressed. Whilst all the damage was being done ashore, the launch was searching the foreshore for our cables, and I noted with delight that she first raised a small type (probably B), which would be our half-naut of spare laid out in the lagoon. The greater part of her time was taken up in coiling this cable inboard, and it did not appear to strike them that there was a considerable slack for a laid cable. Later they raised Perth, which they experienced very great difficulty in cutting, and which was one of the causes of their not getting aboard the cruiser. The cut was made about 300 yards from the jetty. At about 8.45 a.m. the *Emden* steamed in again, and made frantic endeavours to recall her boats, using both her flags and sirens. The launch appeared to be unwilling to give up her cable, and some delay was experienced in getting her in and the men aboard. Lieutenant von Mücke shook hands with me on leaving, and apologised for having to blow up our small engineer's store—owing to there being a roll of electric light cable there—and hoped the flames would not spread. All the men were looked over for loot, and a few minutes later put out to rejoin their ship. . . .

"After the departure of the boats, I requested the staff to have breakfast and then help in clearing up and finding out exactly how we stood. The time was about 9.30 a.m. We had scarcely reached our houses when a report was brought in that a large ship was approaching from the eastwards, and at the same time it was noticed that the *Emden* had raised her anchor and was standing out to sea. Getting on to the barrier, a cruiser was seen coming up at a great rate, stoking heavily and enveloped in a cloud of black smoke. It was only an occasional glimpse now and then which showed her to be a four-funnelled light cruiser, which we incorrectly assumed to be the *Newcastle*. Coming out of the entrance the *Emden* fired immediately, and we were afterwards informed that shells landed in both the *Sydney's* controls, breaking one of their range-finders. The reply was instantaneous, and a very picturesque battle started at a range of about 3,700 yards and within a mile or so of the barrier.

"The *Emden* worked her guns splendidly, and seemed to be firing continually. Her shells were plainly visible, cutting through the black smoke of the *Sydney*, and she appeared to be making good shooting. The *Sydney*, on the other hand, having to pick up her range by gunfire, was at first somewhat handicapped, her shells landing over or short of the other cruiser and apparently somewhat astern. They had, no doubt, underestimated her speed, as she was travelling at a big rate. This, however, was speedily rectified, and getting out of range of the *Emden's* guns she hit her frequently. The latter soon lost a funnel and almost immediately a mast, followed by another funnel, and was seen to be burning astern, with an escape of white steam from her side. The two ships then passed the horizon and were lost to sight. We afterwards learnt that to avoid sinking she ran for a reef at North Keeling, burning furiously. . . . The landing party had, meanwhile, returned, and the German flag was hoisted. I was asked to get the men together, and it was explained to them that they were under German martial law, and that any attempt to communicate with the enemy would bring about drastic punishment. All fire-arms had to be given up, and the staff put up under an armed guard. When Lieutenant

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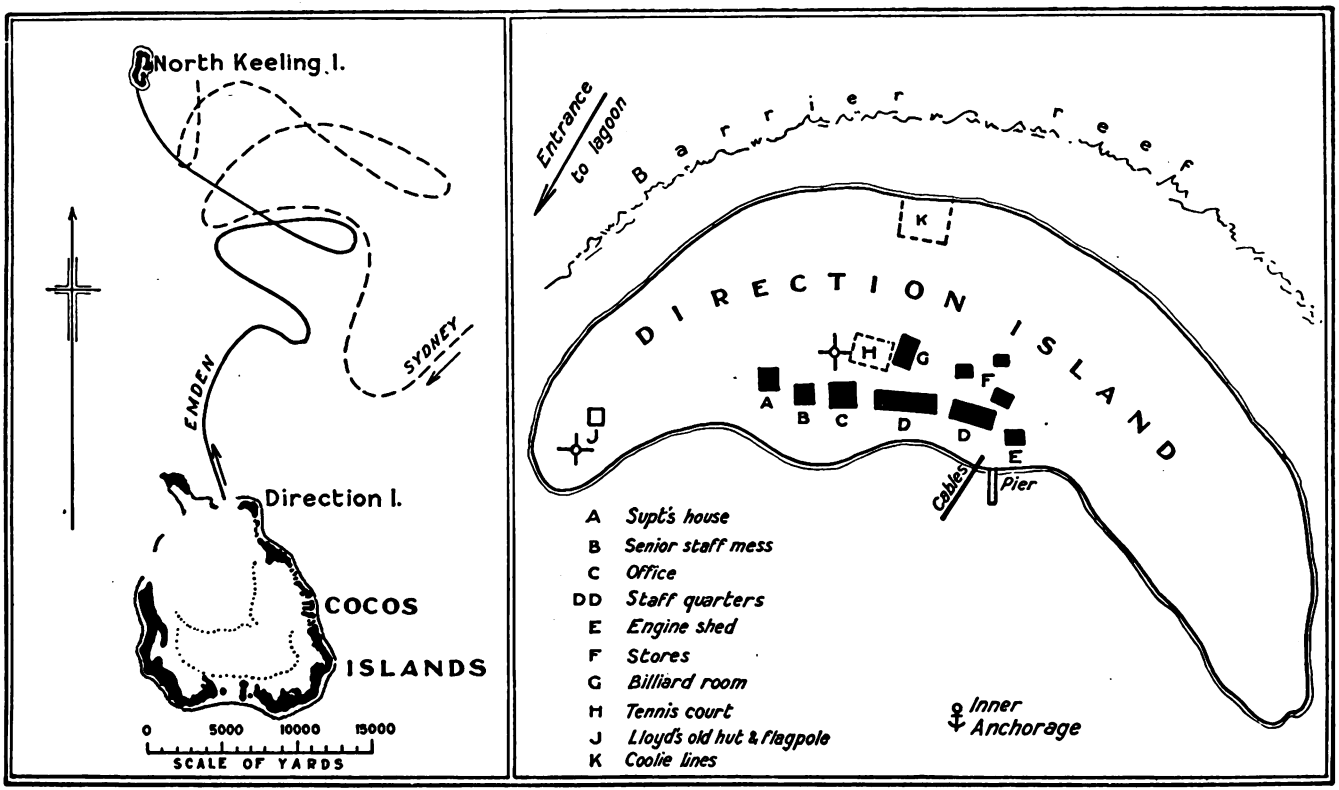

THE COCOS GROUP AND DIRECTION ISLAND

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von Mücke came up he explained that, if the *Emden* did not return before evening, he would take the schooner *Ayesha* and leave the island. He required provisions, which he said would be returned or paid for later, and asked for any old clothes for his men. He allowed us full liberty, and allowed me to lock up my office, the stationery, etc. It was only now, when the officers were too busily engaged in provisioning the schooner to properly look after their men, that a good deal of petty pilfering went on, and more damage was done to the already destroyed office. At 6 p.m. they joined the *Ayesha*, towing their two boats and being towed by the launch. The German flag was broken at the peak, and after giving three cheers for the staff, and the compliment returned, they stood out to sea in the dark.

"We had made no provision for lighting, as they had not discovered our oil store, and I thought it desirable to see them away before opening it up. At 6.30 p.m. we groped for and dug up our buried mirror, collected cells from the various hiding places in the bush, and quickly got into communication with Batavia, who answered our second or third short call. We tried Rodrigues, but probably our battery was too small, and we failed to raise him. After reporting as much as was necessary—as we were tired out, and working with candles in the midst of a chaos of broken glass—I closed down for the night, telling Batavia to watch for us at daylight.

"At 6.30 a.m. on the 10th we dug up and brought in our spare instrument, tray cells, etc., and were early in a position to wire reports and exchange services with Singapore. Discovering a milammeter in a fairly good state of preservation, we were able to roughly test the other two cables, finding Rodrigues in good order and Perth cut. We communicated with the former station, and a boat with the handy men, under Mr. Griffin, searched successfully for the Perth ends. The cable was somewhat pulled about, and had to be straightened before making a temporary connection. The ends were lashed to a life-boat, and communication restored early in the afternoon. Our Chinese lighter was scuttled by the Germans, and I was very glad to receive from Captain Glossop the above-mentioned life-boat, which had previously belonged to the *Emden's* collier, the *Buresk*, and which Cocos Station should find extremely useful. . . .

"Dr. Ollerhead, by going on to the roof to inspect the *Emden's* fourth funnel, gave me the chance of putting out the wireless call without any waste of time; Mr. C. H. K. La Nauze maintained the call under very trying conditions; Mr. Preshaw worked long hours erecting instruments and re-wiring circuits. Mr. Griffin recovered the Perth ends, and straightening out the cable, enabled us to make a short connection. Mr. Beauchamp went out after dark to recover buried instruments, and Mr. Cherry constructed another instrument out of very unpromising material collected from the débris.

"I suppose we were putting out our calls for a quarter of an hour, first 'Strange ship at entrance,' and later '*Emden* here.'[1] The first was picked up, but I have heard no mention of the second. Lieutenant von Mücke, a tall, pleasant, well-built man, allowed me to do almost everything I asked him, and I am pleased to say that at my request he sent no one to Home Island. They were all thoroughly sick of the work they had to do, and up to their arrival here had not

[1] This was evidently jammed, as no ship records having picked it up.

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lost a man. He told me that the *Emden* had a complement of 300 men, of whom forty were ashore; but later Dr. Ollerhead said that one of the survivors told him that she had 352 on board at the commencement of the fight. Whatever the number was, he considered the absence of the landing party a very severe handicap. He explained to me the *Zhemchug* incident, and how they tried to lure the *Pistolet* to close quarters. He further explained that it was the first time that he had been ashore for three months, except for seven minutes on 'another island.' It was not the *Emden* that passed here on the 1st September, but he suggested that it might have been the *Königsberg*. I asked him whether, in the event of our cruiser returning, he intended to fight on the island, and he shrugged his shoulders and said 'I must.' As the ship would have most certainly shelled him, I arranged with him that the staff and servants should go to another island out of the danger zone, and I told the carpenter to tell the Chinamen to make all preparations to leave. On account of the few boats, and the probable shortness of notice, I am afraid that not all could have got away; but I had no intention of going until every man and servant had gone. Direction Island would have afforded sufficient shelter, and was quite safe for a few, and I did not feel at all inclined to move. Another officer with the landing party was Lieutenant Schmidt, son of Admiral Schmidt of Kiel.

"The *Emden* flew no colours, and evidently hoped to find us asleep. As it was, they turned out quite a few men!"

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APPENDIX No. 19.

A SUVLA BAY EPISODE.

Fairly late in the day, as we all lay sprawling on the rocks or under the thorn-bushes, I saw a little party staggering along the defile which led up to the Sirt at this point. There were two men with cowboy hats, and between them they helped another very thin and very exhausted-looking fellow, who tottered along holding one arm, which had been wounded. As they came closer I recognised my little lance-jack, very pale and shaky, a little thinner than usual; the other two, one on each side, were sturdy enough—well-built men, one short and the other tall, with great rough brown hands, sunburnt faces, and bare arms. They wore brown leggings and riding-breeches and khaki shirts. They carried their rifles at the trail, and strode up to us with the graceful gait of those accustomed to the outdoor life.

"Australians!" said someone.

"An' the corporal!"

"Where's your boss?" asked the tall colonial.

"The adjutant is over here," I answered.

"We'd like a word with him," continued the man. I took them up to the officer, and they both saluted in an easy-going sort of way.

"We found him up there"—the Australian jerked his head—"being sniped and could'nt get away—says he belongs to the 32nd Ambulance—so here he is."

The two were just about to slouch off again when the adjutant called them back. "Where did you find him?" he asked.

"Up beyond Jefferson's Post: there was five snipers pottin' at him, an' it looked mighty like as if his number was up. We killed four of the snipers and got him out."

"That was very good of you. Did you see any more Medical Corps up there? We've lost some others, and an officer and sergeant."

"No, I didn't spot any—did you, Bill?" The tall man turned to his pal leaning on his rifle.

"No," answered the short sharpshooter; "he's the only one. It was a good afternoon's sport—very good. We saw he'd got no rifle, and was in a tight close-hitch, so we took the job right there and finished four of them; but it took *some* creepin' and crawlin'."

"Well, we'll be quittin' this now," said the tall one. "There's only one thing we'd ask of you, sir; don't let our people know anything about this."

"But why?" asked the adjutant, astonished. "You've saved his life, and it ought to be known."

"Ya-as, that may be, sir; but we're not supposed to be up here sharpshooting—we just done it for a bit of sport. Rightly we don't carry a rifle; we belong to the bridge-building section. We've only borrowed these rifles from the Cycle Corps, an' we shall be charged with bein' out of bounds without leave, and all that sort of thing, if it gets known down at our headquarters."

"Very well, I'll tell no one; all the same it was good work, and we thank you for getting him back to us," the adjutant smiled.

The two Australians gave him a friendly nod, said "So long, you chaps!" and lurched off down the defile.

—(From *At Suvla Bay*, by John Hargrave, Sergeant in the 32nd Field Ambulance.)

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APPENDIX No. 20.

WORK OF THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVAL BRIDGING TRAIN.

Among the duties allotted to the Train at Suvla, the following extracts from a report by the O.C. indicate the nature of the work which had at times to be performed.

The operations for the final evacuation necessitated the building of a long and heavy "Crib" pier. Heavy timber was available from Mudros in a few days, but large bolts and iron dowels were unprocurable except from a Mediterranean base. The unit therefore decided to strip a wrecked "sand dredge" and to make the bolts and dowels. A party was sent to cut up the rungs of the engine-room ladders and the round iron forming portion of the deck and bridge railing. This was brought ashore and, with the portable forges and stocks and dies with which the unit was equipped, the necessary bolts and dowels were completed in a few days.

. . . . . .

Amongst the salvage operations performed by the unit stands out the salving of "K" Motor Lighter No. 28. This was a twin-screw iron motor lighter with internal-combustion engines, a vessel of great value in such a far-off theatre of operations. She went ashore . . . and the big sea which was running carried her over a shelf of rocks and deposited her firmly aground in a little basin. Before the weather moderated I inspected this motor lighter and was of the opinion that it would be impossible to refloat her; however, when the weather cleared and we were able to wade round her and sound the reefs, we decided to make the attempt. We found it would be necessary to raise her forefront approximately 2 feet to clear her, and with a favourable tide to run out a wire and buoy it, and then one of H.M. ships to pick it up and endeavour to tow her off. The flagship was asked to signal if she could supply certain lengths of heavy timber and some heavy "slipper" wedges. These . . . were obtained from Mudros. . . . By laying down some heavy timber as "side ways" and by driving "slipper" wedges in the following novel method, we were able to lift the fore part of the vessel as desired. A long baulk of heavy timber was placed under the combing of the hatch on one side and inclined over the side of the vessel on the other at an angle of about 45°. From this was slung by balance longitudinally a short baulk of timber approximately 18 x 18 (hardwood). The sling was fastened to the end of the baulk, protruding over the ship's side from the hold, and allowed the heavy piece of hardwood, which we called the rammer, to just touch the water. The wedge was placed in position and the men forming the "rammer's" crew, working waist deep in water, would pull the rammer out, incline the outer end slightly, and force it in; at each blow . . . the wedge was driven in a portion of an inch, sometimes more. This operation was tedious and dangerous, for the position of the wreck was within clear view of the Turkish positions . . . the result

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being that more shells were sent our way than was at all pleasant for the carrying out of such work. After approximately four or five days, when the fore-part of the vessel was nearly clear, a south-westerly gale . . . unshipped the chocks and wedges from underneath the motor lighter's bilge and rendered abortive the heavy work of the past few days. Nothing daunted, immediately the weather became moderate, a fresh start was made and in a few days the fore-part of the lighter was "shored" up sufficiently to warrant an attempt at towing her off. . . . We fastened a 3-inch wire rope round the bollards on the lighter's port bow, led it through the fair leads on the port bow down through a shackle . . . and out seawards—which was on her starboard side—and buoyed. At 10 o'clock that night the S.N.O. . . . sent a vessel, which picked up the buoyed wire hawser and after half-an-hour's towing succeeded in pulling the lighter clear of the reefs into deep water. Not a plate had been holed or her twin propellers damaged. The damage mainly consisted of dented plates and a number of bolts which had been "started."

The following is a fair sample of the numerous cargoes consigned to the British forces at Suvla Bay which were discharged, landed, and distributed by the R.A.N.B.T.:—

Munitions and stores discharged from the store-ship *Perdito*, Suvla, September, 1915:—

Bombs, various, cases	372
Grenades, various, cases	25
Gelignite, lb.	150
Ammonal, lb.	500
Picks and helves	2,100
Shovels, R.E.	3,050
Billhooks	160
Axes, hand	210
Axes, felling	349
Barbed-wire, coils	320
French wire, coils	110
Staples for wire, boxes	20
Spikes for wire, boxes	25
Corrugated iron, sheets	670
Sleepers	160
Timber, 6″ x 6″ x 16′, pieces	75
Timber, 12″ x 6″ x 30′, pieces	50
Timber, 9″ x 6″ x 12′, pieces	49
Timber, 6″ x 4″ x 16′, pieces	209
Timber, 4″ x 4″ x 12′, pieces	410
Timber, 3″ x 3″ x 12′, pieces	625
Timber, 9″ x 1½″ x 16′, pieces	89
Bolts and nuts, various, cases	6
Nails, various, cases	14
Spikes, various, cases	2
Loophole plates, cases	50

The problems connected with the working of the floating bridges on the Suez Canal may be judged from the following extracts from E.E.F. orders:—

Four large square placards, painted white with a broad horizontal black band in the centre, have been placed one on each side of the Canal north and south of the bridges at military posts. That portion of the Canal between the two sets of placards is called the "Bridge Zone."

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Vessels approaching a bridge will not go beyond the two placards and enter the Bridge Zone if red flags are hoisted on the poles near the placards. They must tie up and wait until the flags are lowered before proceeding.

Native craft must sail or be towed through the bridges, and must not attempt to drift through with the current.

No vessel is to drop an anchor in the Bridge Zone.

Vessels not wishing to pass through the bridge but wishing to enter the Bridge Zone while the red flags are hoisted will inform the man posted at the flag pole to that effect, and, if necessary, receive instructions from him.

Vessels are not allowed to tie up to bridges or bridge-heads.

Bridges and Ferries.—The bridges and ferries on the Canal are exclusively under the control of the military authorities. No ferries are to cross, nor are bridges to be thrown in front of ships moving along the Canal.

The pace at which large vessels move is deceptive, and it must be explained to all concerned that it is not possible to stop these ships quickly.

Bridges can be thrown during the following hours without reference:—

Kantara	0700 to 0830
	1500 to 1630
Ballah	0700 to 0830
	1500 to 1630
El Ferdan	0700 to 0830
	1500 to 1630
Ferry Post	0630 to 0800
	1100 to 1200
	1400 to 1500
	1600 to 1700
Serapeum	0600 to 0700
	1130 to 1230
	1700 to 1800
Shallufa	0600 to 0900
	1700 to 1800
Kubri	0600 to 0900

Bridges can often be thrown at hours other than the above, without impeding navigation. In such cases the wharfmaster will communicate with the head of the nearest Canal Station, who will inform the wharfmaster of the most convenient hour for throwing the bridge. As much notice as possible must be given.

Men-of-war passing along the Canal must not on any account be delayed at the bridges.

It is to be understood that small craft carrying works, material, stones, stores, etc., are not to be held up for a longer period than one hour, owing to bridges being kept in position, and as a general rule such craft are to be given passage as quickly as possible.

Permanent detachments are to be detailed for bridging work in order that they may become expert at their duties.

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APPENDIX No. 21.

THE CAUSE OF SINKING OF S.S. *CUMBERLAND.*

[*Extracts from the Report of Major H. E. Jones, Investigation Branch of the Attorney-General's Department of the Commonwealth.*]

"We were fortunate in obtaining a piece of plate which was blown out of the ship in No. 1 hold, and which was brought to Sydney on the tug which assisted in the salvaging operations. . . . The portion of the lower plate referred to . . . was made the subject of a very close examination by Sir Thomas Lyle, F.R.S., formerly Professor of Natural Philosophy at the University of Melbourne, and W. H. Warren, Professor of Engineering at the University of Sydney. . . . After consideration of the evidence obtained, the experts were of opinion that the explosion was from without, the reasons for this conclusion being as follows:

"The explosion occurred when all the officers except the officer on the bridge were at breakfast or indoors, and when very few of the crew were on deck. There does not seem to have been any upward spout of water from outside the ship, only an uprush of smoke; water and yellowish smoke with an acrid smell issued from one of the sounding tubes of No. 1 ballast tank. . . .

"The explosion was one of enormous power. To produce the effects described above, a minimum charge of 150 lb. and probably one of 200 lb. of high explosive would be necessary. It is doubtful whether a charge of 150 lb. of high explosive exploded 17 feet under water would eject a column of water into the air. If anything like 150 lb. or even 100 lb. of high explosive had been used inside the ship it would have been placed so that on exploding it would have made the hole in the side of the ship where the actual hole was found. This location would have been in No. 1 lower hold among the beef and in the neighbourhood of the centre of the actual hole. Such a quantity of high explosive exploding at this place would probably have damaged considerably the deck over No. 1 hold and the hatches. There is doubt, however, that these were uninjured.

"A large area of the shell of the ship round the actual hole was pressed or dented in. It is inconceivable that such a condition could be produced by anything exploding within the vessel.

"The paint over a large area of the ship's surface in the neighbourhood of the hole had disappeared. This is easy to account for if the explosion occurred outside, and very difficult to account for if the explosion occurred inside.

"It has been proved that the greater part of the smashed plates were turned inwards round the edges of the hole. This is sufficient evidence that the explosion which caused the damage occurred outside the vessel, for if the explosion had been from the inside where there was reasonable tamping, such as frozen meat afforded, none of the plates would have been turned inwards. . . .

"That this theory is reasonably correct is verified by means of the large strip already spoken of. . . . We have conclusive evidence that *before* the *frames and plates of the ship collapsed*, an enormous

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pressure acted on the plates from outside inwards. It may, therefore, be concluded from this alone, apart from any other evidence, that the explosion which caused the loss of the ship was from outside inwards. . . .

"If there was an explosive or infernal machine in No. 1 lower hold, it must have been placed there while the ship was at Bowen, Queensland. In our opinion, the evidence was conclusive that there was no communication possible with that hold after the ship left Bowen, unless that afforded by the temperature sounding tubes. The ventilators were insulated properly with sawdust and thus stopped up, and were correct at the time of explosion, as the sawdust was blown out of them. The temperature sounding tubes reached only to the top, or a little below the top of the hole, and the temperature was taken by one or other of the freezing engineers every four hours. Not one single suspicious circumstance was disclosed at the inquiry or as a result of investigations in regard to the conduct of any member of the crew.

"Twenty-two days elapsed between the time the hatches were closed on No. 1 hold at Bowen and the time of the explosion, and although it is not an impossibility to have a timing device for exploding to run twenty-two days before acting, it is highly improbable that one would be constructed to run for such a long time before operating. . . .

"Bowen is a small community, and the most astute and capable detectives available have not been able to discover a single suspicious circumstance about any of the wharf labourers who were employed in the loading of No. 1 hold. . . .

"The whole of the evidence strongly supports the theory that the explosion was external. It was stated in a report of the Department of the Navy that it would be impossible for a fixed mine to have been placed in a position where the *Cumberland* met with disaster owing to the depth of water (about 70 fathoms), but as the normal position of fixed mines from the surface is dependent upon the length of mooring cable, the effective placing of mines appears to be well within the limits of possibility. The result of the investigations showed conclusively that a mine was responsible for the damage. . . ."

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APPENDIX No. 22.

EXTRACTS FROM DIARIES OF MEN SERVING IN THE AUSTRALIAN DESTROYERS.

I. In Malaysia.

The following are extracts from the diary of a stoker in the *Huon* during the service of the Australian destroyers in Malaysia:—

19 June, 1916.—*Huon* left Sydney 9.5 a.m. . . .

12 July.—Left Thursday Island . . . sighted the *King Cyrus*, American barque . . . examined her and proceeded.

23 July.—Dropped anchor off the Customs House pier, Sandakan, North Borneo (China Station).

25 July.—Proceeded alongside oilship and . . . to sea on patrol.

(25 July to 11 August.—*Huon* patrolling off the Celebes. During this time she examined a Dutch steamer, oiled from the *Esturia*, carried out gunnery practice, and met the *Warrego*.)

12 August.—Arrived at Sandakan. H.M.S. *Venus*, H.M.A.S. *Fantome*, a Japanese cruiser, several colliers, and other merchant boats there. At 7 p.m. H.M.S. *Cadmus* arrived. . . . All the ships are run by Chinamen. When you come out you have a tribe of Chinese nippers following you, and if you give them anything more follow you. . . . At night all you hear is a terrible yabbering.

25 August.—Left port. (29th) Stopped the s.s. *Neil McLeod* (American) and boarded. . . . In the afternoon we stopped and drifted in mid-ocean, and the racing-boats' crews went away for exercise.

30 August.—On patrol off Basilan Island. Stopped the E. & A. mail steamer *St. Albans* from Hong Kong to Sydney; boarded her and got some fresh mutton, which was very acceptable as we were on bully beef.

2 September.—On patrol in the Tawi Tawi Islands. Ship sighted at 5.30 a.m. At 6 a.m. signalled for her to stop engines. As she didn't stop fifteen minutes after the signal, we fired a blank shot from the port 12-pounder, and she stopped at once . . . s.s. *Tjilatjap* from Batavia to Hong Kong.

3 September.—On patrol in the Sibutu passage. . . . (7th) Met the Danish motor-ship *Columbia* which we searched and took one prisoner off, and proceeded on patrol. (8th) Arrived in Sandakan.

10 September.—Left for Manila—a distance of over 500 miles and only 24 hours to do it in—to stop a ship and search her before she got into neutral country. The first hour at sea we steamed 15 knots, second 20, third 22, fourth 23, fifth 25 knots.

11 September.—Arrived outside Manila; 2.50 a.m. stopped and searched the s.s. *Chin Maa* . . . . ; 3.30 a.m. s.s. *Cebir* . . . ; 7.5 a.m. s.s. *Tong Yek*. . . . An American destroyer followed us all afternoon.

13 September.—Arrived at Sandakan.

16 September.—Destroyer flotilla left for sea. (17th) 9.20 a.m. commenced manœuvres. 6.5 p.m. arrived at Jesselton in British North Borneo, much the same as Sandakan only cleaner.

(17-22 September was spent in harbour—route-march, football, oiling ship, etc.)

23 September.—Manœuvres.

27 September.—At sea on the Palawan patrol.

14 October.—At sea on patrol. More gunnery practice. Of an evening the sunset looks very pretty. Everything is so still and calm that you seem afraid to speak to break the silence. It is the evening that we look forward to, as the days are so hot and long.

15 October.—On . . . what is called the Equator patrol . . . extra hot and sultry—as far as you can see is calm still water, not a ripple . . . in the next hour it is running big seas. (18th) Chased a Japanese, and later a British, and a Dutch ship.

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25 October.—Still terrible hot days, and bully beef and biscuits to eat. (26th) Heavy rainstorm. All hands on deck having a rain bath.

27 October.—Arrived in Sandakan.

(28 October to 13 November, in Harbour. Football, cricket, oiling. "church parade—the choir composed of Chinese boys with no boots on but they can sing all right.")

(13 November to 1 December.—On patrol. Stopped nine Dutch steamers, one Dane, one Russian, and spoke to several passing Japanese.)

2 December.—Making for harbour as fast as we could, as we were very short of oil.

19 December.—On patrol. Sighted a ship and gave chase but she steamed into neutral waters and got away from us; but in the night—9.30 p.m.—she came out and tried to get away, but we got between her and the land, and as she wouldn't answer us we fired a 12-pounder blank . . . she was a Dutch steamer.

(On 23 December a Dutch steamer refused to stop until two 4-inch projectiles had been fired.)

25 December.—Christmas Day. On patrol—dirty weather—had bully beef and biscuits and some duff we knocked up ourselves.

6 January, 1917.—Arrived in Singapore.

14 January.—Left harbour and relieved H.M.A.S. *Torrens* on the Brothers patrol. During that night challenged seven ships of different nationality.

21 January.—Left Singapore.

(From 21 January to 15 February the *Huon* patrolled, calling at Miri, Labuan, Jesselton, Kudat; thence to the Philippines, Sandakan, and Singapore; on 18 February she was out again on the Brothers patrol, and captured a suspicious Norwegian ship, and left her at Port Sweetenham. 24 February to 2 June, alternately patrolling off Singapore and resting; on 11 June docked.)

2 July.—Proceeded to sea in company with H.M.A.S's *Torrens* and *Swan* for destination unknown.

7 July.—Sighted Cocos Islands in the Indian Ocean. 8 a.m. dropped anchor opposite wireless station. The *Warrego, Parramatta,* and *Yarra* are here.

II. In Mediterranean and Black Sea.

The following is mainly extracted from the diary of an ex-*Tingira* boy in the *Parramatta*, but includes (where marked "*Huon*") passages from the diary quoted above:—

9 June, 1917 (*Parramatta*).—Left Sydney at 3 p.m. . . . Three destroyers 55 (*Parramatta*), 79 (*Yarra*), and 70 (*Warrego*) . . . steaming north.

7 July (*Parramatta* at Cocos Islands).— . . . A notable event in the H.M.A.T.B.D. Flotilla. For the first time in its existence the six destroyers came together. . . .

15 July (*Parramatta*).—Diego Garcia. . . . (16th) A search of the islands is being made to find survivors of two ships which a raider has sunk.

20 July (*Parramatta*).—Port Victoria, Seychelles. . . . (21st) Played soccer with natives and won.

28 July–3 August (*Parramatta*).—Aden . . . fighting line 15 miles inland . . . fifteen men from each ship to go to firing line on a pleasure trip . . . altogether 102 men went out. . . . Not a bit of firing was heard out there. They were not allowed close to enemy, although two people got on No-Man's Land in the haze.

6 August (*Parramatta* in Red Sea).—Commander Warren spoke to us of what he required our knowing. "When a submarine is sighted I am going for her."

9 August (*Huon*).—4 p.m. Proceeded through the Canal. . . . Troops from all parts of Australia were there. We flew an Australian flag at the yard arm, and we got a chuck up from the Australian troops.

12 August (*Parramatta*).—*Parramatta, Yarra, Huon, Torrens* left with convoy of five merchantmen across the Mediterranean. (13th) In the war zone now and in real earnest. . . . The vigilance kept is almost extreme for fear of an enemy submarine taking a liking to a fat turkey of our convoy. (15th) Both *Yarra* and *Torrens* sighted a submarine. . . . We did not see her for she dipped too quickly, but we circled everywhere at 24 knots. We were all

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cheerful. . . . Extra vigilance kept now. (16th)[1] Shortly after going on afternoon watch a calm patch of water was observed. The day being with scarcely a ripple on all the sea, this patch excited suspicion, especially because another patch of a like manner was made near by. . . . The captain called "Full speed" . . . and the ship's head was put to it. The patches remaining the same a conclusion was made by the captain that it was nothing, so the ship was turned round to join the convoy. In the act of turning, the officer of the watch says he saw a feather (of foam from the periscope) and . . . reported it. . . . . The patch was lengthening at about four knots and swerving to the left. . . . *Parramatta* was at general quarters and galloping at a little over 27 knots. A moment after we were over the spot, and a little farther on the captain in his good judgment cried "Let go depth charge." . . . A great dome of boiling water was made by the explosion, and, easing the engines, we steamed over the top. . . . There was oil—though in no extra large quantity—and splotches of black stuff. . . . The *Yarra* fired at an object rising to the surface. . . . The *Huon* and *Torrens* were steaming hard and keeping with the convoy. I was reminded of cowboys riding hard after cattle and protecting them from the Red Indians. . . . *Torrens* and a Frenchman in rear of the ships fired at two submarines . . . and successfully beat off the attack. (17th) The convoy safe in the harbour of St. Paul's, Malta. As soon as the convoy's safety was assured we steamed 18 (knots) to the Grand Harbour.

(From 18 August to 21 September *Parramatta* was at Malta.)

2 September.—An invitation from French man-o'-war *Voltaire* caused a number of boys to go to their cinematograph show. (20th) We were hastily called to reinforce a convoy, and, having steam on main engines, were away with the *Huon* and *Torrens* steaming at about 20. Reached the convoy, which consisted of three ships with one sloop for escort. They had lost two merchantmen that day, but we escorted them safely to St. Paul's Bay.

22 September (*Parramatta*).—After passing numerous minefields arrived safely at Corfu. French fleet at anchor. (23rd) In the evening a party for the *Voltaire* for cinema went aboard the wrong ship, but stopped there.

27 September (*Parramatta*).—Steamed for Malta.

2 October (*Parramatta*).—Taranto. Anchored till they swung the bridge and booms to let us in to the inner harbour. . . . (3rd) H.M.S. *Queen* is our parent ship. Between our 1st division and H.M.S. *Queen* are nearly 20 drifters for the Adriatic. The Adriatic drifters now come under Commander Warren, and our destroyers are to be the drifters' protectors. The commodore told us this. . . .

5 October (*Parramatta*).—Left at 10 p.m. yesterday. An object was sighted . . . it seemed like a trawler at first but at last all flotilla decided that it was a submarine, and, to our dismay, while we were going at it full belt it disappeared below the surface about 6,000 yards away. . . . Anchored at Corfu.

11 October (*Parramatta*).—All the flotilla weighed and went to sea. She was washing down the foc's'le and it was utterly a miserable night . . . bitterly cold. (12th) Headed into Brindisi.

14 October (*Huon*).— . . . (2nd Division) left Brindisi and proceeded to sea on patrol. The *Torrens* and *Swan* accompanied us. (15th) Patrolling from the coast of Italy to the coast of Albania across the Adriatic Sea on the lookout for submarines and Austrian fleet. (16th) Passed several dead bodies floating about with lifebelts on. One was a woman and the others soldiers. . . . (18th) Passed several more bodies, and sunk two enemy mines by gunfire . . . 4.30 p.m. relieved by 1st Division of Australian destroyers.

19 October (*Parramatta*—with 1st Division).—In the forenoon (Friday) . . . . we had a spasm which sent us steaming at 26 knots from 10.30 till 1.45 after an enemy ship which we didn't see. While on chase we passed a torpedo stopped but pointing at us and only 20 yards off. Perhaps it was an ill shot at us. . . . (24th) Received a rumour . . . that the Austrians were half-an-hour away when we turned back on Friday's gallop.

31 October (*Parramatta* at Brindisi).—The three of us (1st Division) are together moored heads to buoys and sterns to the shore with a gangway over the stern. . . . H.M.S. *Weymouth* (flag), *Gloucester*, and *Dartmouth* are the cruisers in Brindisi. The Italians of course have plenty of destroyers and a couple of light cruisers. French had destroyers and subs.

1 November (*Parramatta*).—I believe that this ship deposited from Tuesday's pay no less than £450 in the Commonwealth savings bank. (2nd) The vegetable

[1] This day's entry in the diary was expanded at a later date. The expanded account is here quoted.

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ration is being made shorter by the Italian food control. An area of land has been put at the disposal of all British ships at Brindisi. We Australians have about an acre. (3rd) Alarm of a hostile aerial attack. 1st Division . . . relieved patrol.

2 November (*Huon*, on patrol).—A torpedo was fired at us by a submarine, but it went under us—this is the second that has gone under us.

8 November (*Parramatta*).—A pleasant surprise. . . . Arranged between the Commodore of *Weymouth* and Commander Warren that we (boys) . . . be given two forenoons each time in (harbour) on H.M.S. *Weymouth* for gunnery and torpedo instructions. (9th) Our garden is marked out and a party of four men went over and made a start by planting pumpkin.

15 November (*Parramatta*).—1st Division put to sea. . . . The ship made a nasty fuss of the small lopp. . . . Relieved four French destroyers. (16th—The *Orione* incident occurred on this patrol, but is more fully related in *chapter x.*) (17th) Found our ship of yesterday (*Orione*) at anchor on a minefield . . . abandoned.

25 November (*Huon*).—Chased a submarine but she dipped before we could fire. . . . (26th) Sighted a submarine on the horizon. We fired two shots . . . at 7,000 but she dipped before we could get close. . . . (29th) In harbour. Played French ships Rugby but they beat us 17–0. (2 December) Played French submarines Rugby and beat 7–4.

8 December (*Parramatta*).—Polling on the Referendum (" for conscription on a modified principle "). (14th) As activity has been reported among the Austrians we were ready at a moment's notice.

25 December (*Huon*).—Left harbour for sea. As we passed the British cruisers they gave us three cheers on account of going to sea on Christmas Day. (Boxing Day) Put into Valona on account of rough weather. (1 January, 1918) Left Taranto on secret service, carrying M. Venizelos and his staff. (2 January) Arrived at Piræus. (4th) Proceeded through the Corinth Canal.

27 December (*Parramatta*).—H.M.T.B.D. *Alarm* . . . is to work with us. (11 February) When we work in pairs, *Parramatta* and *Alarm* go together, and *Swan* and *Huon*. . . . (20 February) The *Torrens* has done a good deal of work since leaving dock. . . . She is fitted with a hydrophone for detecting submarines.

21 March, 1918 (*Huon*).—Left harbour with H.M.A.S. *Parramatta*. . . . (22nd) Arrived outside Patras and picked up a convoy. (Then till 4 April escorting transports backwards and forwards from Taranto to Itea.) . . . The hills all around (Itea) were covered in snow. The troops go overland from Itea to Salonica. (4 April) Troopship was attacked by submarines, but they were driven off. . . .

13 April (*Parramatta*).—Commander W. H. F. Warren drowned in Brindisi harbour.

14 April (*Huon*).—About sixteen British destroyers in harbour. . . .

3 May (*Parramatta*).—Received our hydrophones. . . . (14th) At 7 o'clock we left Wallaby Trot and . . . by 8.30 a drifter had the balloon Edith alongside. . . . We went to sea with balloon at 10, but by noon it was seen that the Edith needed more gas. We brought her down and gassed her and sent up observers, but they soon came down owing to a leak in the balloon. . . . (15th) Only three stokers are fit for duty and six seamen are down with the fever. So we could not proceed to sea. (16th) Air raid signal was given. . . . I got on deck for a short while and saw the enemy machine.

19 May (*Parramatta*).—This morning we got our balloon (Madge) on the winch, and by 9 a.m. were well clear of the outer boom. (20th) At daybreak we placed observers in balloon and sent them up. . . . About 2.30 we sighted an enemy submarine on the surface. . . . Went for her at full speed and fired three rounds 4-inch at extreme range but no good. . . . At 8 we tried to pull down balloon but winch jammed and balloon ripped herself and fell into sea. So ended Madge.

2 June (*Parramatta*).—The (new) balloon is doing well. There are about eight other destroyers with us on patrol, but we are alone all day. (17th) All through the night the hydrophone was in use every half-hour. . . . About 9 a.m. we passed close to an American submarine chaser. . . . I like these craft. . . .

13 July (*Huon*).—5.40 p.m., drifters reported a submarine that they had followed since 7 a.m. We kept stopping to drop our listeners. We followed her for

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over two hours and just as darkness came on we got her in a square and every ship dropped depth charges. . . . On account of darkness we couldn't see any oil come to the top. (18th) Sighted a submarine from balloon but she got away. (19th) Every quarter-hour stopped to listen for submarines and could hear them all night. 12.30 a.m., could even hear the submarine through the ship's side quite plainly when we died down. 1.30 a.m., torpedo fired at us, but just passed our bows. We were stopped and . . . could not see anything.

29 July (*Parramatta*).—These patrols are becoming so monotonous that they seem nothing more than a mere routine.

9 August (*Parramatta*).—*Huon* and *Yarra* had a collision last night. . . . (10th) Passed the two lame ducks. *Huon* has her bows turned round, and *Yarra* has a collision mat over what must be a gaping hole about the ward room. (*Huon* went into dock at Genoa for repairs till 10 November. Five of her crew died there of "Spanish" influenza. Some visited many northern Italian towns on leave, and even succeeded in reaching the Western Front.)

23 August (*Parramatta*).—They were expecting some stunt last night, for all boats in harbour were in readiness for sea; but nothing happened. . . . (25th) We slipped from berth early and . . . carried out the usual attacking tactics on the incoming flotilla. (26th) To-day I was enabled to make a balloon ascent. An officer of the R.A.F. was my companion. . . . The ship entered a thick fog, while we were above it.

5 September.—Life in Brindisi is indeed getting monotonous. (17th) Passing off time—it's misery in this hole. (28th) Left Brindisi presumably for Leghorn that ship may dock. (29th) At noon we passed close to Stromboli. . . . About 4.30 we turned right round for a wireless signal has recalled us to Taranto. (*Parramatta* had been called back to escort a merchant ship through Corinth Canal to Athens. There the convoy was handed over, and *Parramatta* docked, etc., from 5 to 20, the crew visiting the Acropolis and other sights.)

20th October.—Carried out trials . . . in Salamis Bay, where the great naval fight of ancient days occurred. (21st) Steamed for Mudros.

23 October.—Found the *Yarra* patrolling off Imbros Island on the Dardanelles patrol, and we kept her company. (26th) Passed a mine so closely that it slithered along our side . . . joined the *Yarra*. We are patrolling between Imbros and Samothrake.

27 October.—*Parramatta* between Imbros and Suvla Bay. . . . I had 7 to 8 (p.m.) lookout and it was dark, but we went very nearly into Suvla Bay and well within range of the Turkish batteries. We kept away . . . in daylight hours. I've been thinking during my lookout of our men who fought and fell here. (28th) To-day . . . Gaba Tepe was closer and details could nearly be seen. (31st) A general signal . . . "An armistice has been arranged with Turkey."

2 November.—*Torrens* is said to have gone to a port in Asia Minor at 28 knots. This is record steaming among our boats. (3rd) While negotiations are going on we live in expectation of big things. (7th) We are despatch destroyer to the fleet (running between Salonica and Mudros).

10 November.—S.s. *Katoomba* (Australian coastal liner) is in port to transport 2,000 soldiers for Dardanelles. (11th) Armistice with Germany signed 11 a.m.; and a general signal made to splice main brace. Australian t.b.d's here had enough supplied from *Forester* to run one tot.

12 November.—All the British mobile fleet in Mudros is under way. . . . A mine was sighted and we were detailed to sink it. . . . All ships formed single line ahead. Passed into Dardanelles at 1 p.m. . . . passed Narrows at 1.45 p.m., masts of French (who followed) being just visible.

13 November.—At length Constantinople hove in sight, and by 8 a.m. the grand entree to the capital commenced. . . . The large French fleet steamed to the anchorage in line parallel to the British. . . . In its turn the Italian fleet anchored in a line parallel and then the Greek. . . . At 1 the British fleet had weighed and at length anchored at Ismid. (14th) To-day all the Allied fleet is at . . . the extreme end of the Gulf of Ismid.

25 November.—At 8.30 we were getting through the beautiful Bosphorus . . . *Superb, Temeraire, Justice, Democratie,* and *Roma* are the battle-fleet. (Two divisions of destroyers, including *Swan* and *Parramatta,* went with them, steaming a mile on either beam of the battleships.)

26 November.—Early this morning, while in a heavy sea, we saw the southern end of the Crimea Peninsula. . . . At 10 o'clock the *Superb* was turning into

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Sevastopol. (27th) A good number of Germans are still here. We (*Parramatta*) left at 1.30 with mails and despatches for Constantinople. (*Parramatta* ran between Sevastopol and Constantinople until 16 December.)

5 December.—Sevastopol. Landed at main city steps, and our party tramped through to the scenes of old Crimea fights on a route march. . . . (6th) Constantinople. A Japanese cruiser and some destroyers came in. (9th) Sevastopol. *Huon* and *Warrego* both secured alongside us. . . . Bolsheviks are menacing Sevastopol. (10th) H.M.A.S. *Brisbane* got in here this morning . . . and we're keeping company on our trip to Constantinople.

25 December (at Ismid).—Christmas Day and a merry Christmas. Captain in charge of destroyers went aboard all Australian boats and gave a farewell speech.

26 December.—We Australians have left Ismid for good and seen our last sunrise in Turkey, I suppose. . . .

3 January, 1919 (*Huon*).—Arrived in Gibraltar. 2 p.m., left. (5th) Very rough, lost all our boats and after torpedo-tube and torpedo. (6th) *Torrens'* forward bulkhead gave out so she heaved to and got into harbour the best way she could, *Warrego* standing by her. (7th) *Swan* and *Yarra* out of sight. (8th) Sea moderated a little, so we made for harbour. Got separated from *Parramatta*. We arrived in Ferrol (Spain) in a helpless condition about 3 p.m. *Parramatta* wasn't in, so we went out again to find her. We got her S.O.S. signals. (9th) 12.5 a.m., picked up *Parramatta* and proceeded to harbour (Ferrol), arriving about 3.30 a.m. (13th) Left Ferrol and proceeded to sea, passing through the Bay of Biscay. (14th) Arrived in Devonport. Hands went on 21 days' leave.

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APPENDIX No. 23.

OFFICIAL REPORT OF THE RESCUE BY AUSTRALIAN DESTROYERS OF THE ITALIAN TRANSPORT *ORIONE*,[1] AND LETTER OF APPRECIATION.

The Commanding Officer,
T.B.D. Flotilla,
Brindisi,
19th November, 1917.

The Commodore Commanding,
British Adriatic Forces,

Through The Commodore Commanding,
8th Light Cruiser Squadron,
H.M.S. *Weymouth*.

Submitted,

Patrol Report of Australian T.B. Destroyers,
From 15th to 19th November, 1917.

Thursday, 15th—11.30 a.m.—

Parramatta, Yarra, Huon, and *Warrego,* patrol destroyers' division, patrolled together during the night.

Friday, 16th—a.m.—

After visiting drifter line, detached *Huon* and *Warrego* to patrol western area, *Parramatta* and *Yarra* patrolled eastern area.

11.10 a.m.—Received "S.O.S." from Italian steamer *Orione,* latitude 49° 28′ N., longitude 18° 46′ E. Proceeded to position at full speed. Arrived at 0.20. *Yarra* circled convoy as ordered. *Huon* and *Warrego* already arrived and taking off troops and crew; *Warrego* alongside *Orione,* but had had to leave owing to ship working in the swell.

Ordered *Huon* to circle convoy; *Warrego* recovered her boats and circled the convoy. *Parramatta* examined ship, which did not appear to be making any water; rudder was gone, and explosion had torn away the counter and upper parts of the stern. Sent 1st Lieutenant and Engineer Officer on board, with a signalman, to examine and report. Picked up remaining boats with the master of the transport and members of the crew and some soldiers; several men taken out of the water in the last stages of exhaustion.

1st Lieutenant reported ship making no water. Prevailed on master to return to ship and take his crew; a few went with him. Proceeded to take ship in tow. At 1 p.m. observed track of a torpedo coming straight for the ship; passed under ship and must have passed ahead of *Orione.* Destroyers searched to north-east with no result. At 1.15 p.m. got hawsers on board and commenced towing; placed *Yarra* on starboard quarter to steer ship, but Commanding Officer

[1] *See pp. 321-2.*

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reported damage to his ship through working in swell and had to leave; *Yarra* took hawser on board aft. At 2.30 French destroyers arrived, and Commanding Officer sent on board and asked if he could assist; asked him to circle convoy; detached *Warrego* to proceed to Brindisi with rescued. Hawsers parted twice during afternoon, and second time when we had managed to square ship on her course and were proceeding satisfactorily, which was most unfortunate. But the difficulties of steering her were enhanced by a large piece of rudder still remaining and jammed over hard a-port. Got a third hawser out and used *Parramatta* towing wire. Again got ship in tow, when *Yarra* parted hawser aft at 5 p.m. Hawsers all parted due to chafe at tow astern, which was considerable as ship was yawing so badly—especially aft, where they caught on the jagged edges of damaged plates. At 5.30 p.m. tug arrived and took ship in tow. *Parramatta* had to slip, as it was impossible to haul in long length of hawser out and necessary to clear tug. Officers and men had worked like Trojans all the afternoon, hauling in parted hawsers and getting on board new ones; but Lieutenant Hill and Lieutenant-Engineer Bridge, with a few hands on board the *Orione*, must have had a most strenuous time. At 6 p.m. transferred the rescued men that were on board *Parramatta* to *Huon* and despatched her to Brindisi. At 6.40 p.m. ship being well in tow of tug, our services were no longer required, so left convoy with escort and returned with *Yarra* to carry on patrol. Reported by W/T to *Etna* actions taken.

The escort consisted of Italian torpedo-boats and one torpedo-boat-destroyer, two French T.-B.-destroyers and a tug. The weather at the time was fine, with a slight northerly swell. As ship was going ahead at about 6 knots, and everything appeared satisfactory, I decided to leave my officers and signalmen on board, and told them to remain and rejoin me in *Huon* on patrol on the following morning. At 9.30 p.m. wind started to freshen and sea and swell increasing. 11.30 p.m. Weather continuing to get worse, left patrol line with *Yarra* and proceeded to the northward in case assistance was required. Informed S.N.O., Brindisi, by W/T, of actions taken and reasons. Nothing sighted during the night; wind increased to a moderate gale with high seas.

Saturday, 17th—

Neither received nor intercepted, by W/T, any reports from escort. Daylight sighted three destroyers; closed, and found they were part of the escort. Asked where convoy was; replied they had no news. Proceeded south at high speed before the sea to pick up convoy, which appeared to have been left by the escort.

8.30 a.m.—Passed mine (horizontal-bar type); delayed some time in destroying same, being impossible to get ship steady in the seaway, and mine only appearing occasionally on the crest of a wave. Proceeded at 9.15; sighted ship right ahead at 10 a.m. Closed, and found *Orione* at anchor, 5 miles north of Otranto. A heavy swell running in, but ship appeared to be lying quite comfortably, and in exactly the same state as when last seen. Prepared to lower boat to take off crew, as signal still flying "Require immediate assistance." No signs of life on board. At 10.45 a.m. *Parramatta* and *Yarra* returned to patrol. At 3.30 p.m met Italian steamer *Flamingo* with one trawler escort; escorted her till dark.

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Sunday, 18th—

Weather moderating, but still considerable swell. Sighted drifter line at 4 p.m. off Fano.

Monday, 19th—

Sea increasing rapidly. Left patrol line at 7 a.m. Sighted *Orione* some distance away, but still apparently at anchor. Returned to Brindisi.

The following letter from the Italian Rear-Admiral Alfredo Acton was received by the Senior British Naval Officer at Brindisi:—

"Yesterday on the occasion of the torpedoing of the Italian steamer *Orione* on passage from Valona to Brindisi, I had the opportunity of appreciating the zeal and seamanlike qualities, combined with the spirit of camaraderie, of which the Australian T.B.D's under your orders gave ample proof.

"In expressing my grateful thanks for the prompt and effective action rapidly executed by them, which has been reported by me to H.E. the C.-in-C. of the fleet, I beg you to warmly thank the senior officer, captains, officers, and the brave crews of these ships, to whom I send my warm praises."

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APPENDIX No. 24.

THE *SYDNEY* IN THE NORTH SEA.[1]

The records in the Australian War Memorial include the following descriptions, courteously supplied by Mr. J. W. Seabrook,[2] ex-leading signalman, of two episodes which occurred during the service of the *Sydney* in the North Sea:—

I. Cruise of 19-21 December, 1916.

The crews of light cruiser squadrons attached to Admiral Beatty's force in the North Sea shared a superstition that, if a ship or ships passed seawards under the Forth Bridge and there was no train passing overhead at the same time, something would happen while at sea and the ship and her company would not come back as they left. On Tuesday, 19 December, 1916, when H.M.A.S. *Sydney* passed under the Forth Bridge there was no train, and the ship's company wondered in what form the bad luck was to come. After some tactics had been carried out by the whole fleet, in which the *Sydney* participated, *Sydney*, *Melbourne*, *Dublin*, and *Southampton* with four destroyers were ordered to sweep a section of the Norwegian coast for enemy vessels that it was reported were travelling *en route* to Germany. Very bad weather indeed was experienced, the destroyers finding it very hard work to keep station. The weather got too bad for them, and, in endeavouring to keep up, a collision occurred between the *Hoste* and *Negro*. The stern of one destroyer sank, causing a depth charge to explode which sank both destroyers. *Southampton* and *Dublin* continued to get along fairly well, but the *Sydney* and *Melbourne* were having a bad time of it, especially the *Sydney*. Her waist awning was torn away, and, while a party of men were striving to get the awning under control and lashed down, a huge wave swept the ship, knocking them clean off their feet. One, a seaman boy named Wright, was shot across the deck. His head smashed into a projectile rack, and the skull broke, death being instantaneous.

Commander Finlayson was badly knocked about, his shoulder being dislocated and the sinews of his arms and legs torn. Lieutenant-Commander Rahilly, gunnery officer, although he sustained a very bad compound fracture of the leg, propped himself up on his two arms and told the rescue party to attend to the men first. An able seaman . . . was washed overboard the starboard side by a wave that came across the ship from the port side. As he disappeared over the side a wave that must have struck the ship "head on" came sweeping along the ship's side and washed him back again. He was an extremely lucky lad. Five other men were put on the injured list with flesh wounds and abrasions. Both of the *Sydney's* whalers—five-oared boats used as sea boats in moderate weather—were torn from their davits in consequence of their being dipped under enormous

[1] *See ch. x, sec. ii.*.

[2] Leading Signalman J. W. Seabrook (No. 7914, R.A.N.). Of Regent, Vic.; b. Buckhurst Hill, Essex, Eng., 8 April, 1892.

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waves, and the weight of water, plus the force of going through it, being too much for their falls. The boats were thus swept away. The steam pinnace was the next to suffer. A succession of waves swept it from its cradle and had it well on the way towards going overboard. Captain Glossop saw the danger of the *Sydney* losing her most valuable boat, and made his way aft from the bridge in order to try and do something. Three or four men were mustered, and the party, working under water and spray nearly all the time, eventually managed to secure the steam pinnace, but not before she had a big hole made in her by crushing on her crutches. One man whose name I have forgotten was squeezed between the boat and the after funnel casing, but his injuries did not prove serious. The remaining two boats—twelve-oared—were holed and made unseaworthy, thus leaving the *Sydney* with no boats if the worst happened. On the night of the 21st the weather eased and the *Sydney* arrived back in Rosyth and coaled ship.

II. Action with Zeppelin *L43*.

On Thursday, 3 May, 1917, H.M.A.S. *Sydney*, H.M.S. *Dublin*, and eight destroyers, under the leadership of Captain Dumaresq, left Rosyth with orders to sweep "L" Channel, which was approximately 120 miles long. On this occasion, also, as the ship passed under the Forth Bridge there was no train on the bridge, and the word soon went round—"What's going to happen?"

Nothing of any note occurred until 10.28 a.m. on Friday, 4 May, when H.M.S. *Dublin* reported having been fired at by a submarine, the torpedo missing astern. The destroyer *Obdurate* next reported a submarine, and the *Sydney* and *Obdurate* steamed over the spot and let go depth charges. At 10.30 a.m. the signalman of the watch on board H.M.A.S. *Sydney* reported "Zeppelin right ahead, sir."

A Zeppelin, which we subsequently learned was the *L43*, had been sighted. Captain Dumaresq immediately ordered full steam (25 knots), and his plan of action was as follows: to rush at the Zeppelin and fire a 6-inch gun, with the object of making the Zeppelin engage the *Sydney*. Immediately the Zeppelin was sighted Captain Dumaresq thought that it was working in conjunction with U-boats, the Zeppelin doing the scouting and the U-boats the sinking of British merchantmen. With this thought in mind the captain of the *Sydney* did not intend to rush in too far. It seemed obvious that the *Sydney* sighted the Zepp. first, because, on the *Sydney's* 6-inch projectile landing in the water, the Zeppelin stuck its nose up and tail down and rose rapidly. Here I may explain that the Germans claimed that their Zeppelins could rise at a speed of 500 feet per 30 seconds. The Zeppelin continued to rise and turned away, either because she did not want to fight or else to draw the *Sydney* on in order to get her to steam over the position on the water that the Zeppelin had been manœuvring, which was thought to be a submarine nest or rendezvous. If such was the game, it failed, because as soon as Captain Dumaresq thought he saw through the Hun manœuvre he turned and ran away from the Zeppelin. As soon as the Zepp. saw this move it turned round and chased the *Sydney*, which was exactly what that good ship wanted. Just before the Zeppelin overtook the *Sydney*, Captain Dumaresq ordered "open fire" with the anti-aircraft gun. The

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shots from the *Sydney* went as straight as a gun-barrel for the Zepp. amidships, leaving a thin trail of smoke in their wake, and appeared to anxious eyes on the deck of the *Sydney* to reach their culminating point not many feet below the undercarriage of this mighty Zepp. Groans went up when it was realized that the Zepp. could have it all its own way by keeping outside the *Sydney's* anti-aircraft vertical range of 21,000 feet, and take its time in letting go whatever bombs it had on board. Captain Dumaresq recognised this point, and tried just one more ruse to "kid" the Hun to come a little lower. He ordered all ships to "scatter." The manœuvre "to scatter" is used for several reasons, but had never before been used for Captain Dumaresq's reason. On the order "scatter" all ships turned away from the *Sydney* and, selecting a point on the horizon, set their various courses and steamed outwards at full speed. The result of this was that the Zepp. and the *Sydney* were left to it, and the remaining ships were in a complete circle round them but steaming away. Captain Dumaresq hoped that, when the *Sydney* ordered the remaining ships apparently to run away, the Zepp. would close down on the *Sydney* in order to have a good shot at her with some heavy bombs. As soon as the Zepp. commenced to come down, the *Sydney* hoisted the "recall" to all ships and to "open fire." The result of these signals was that the Zepp. was the centre at which shells from one light cruiser and eight destroyers were coming, the height of the Zepp. being at one time 14,000 feet. She immediately rose to a safer height, and then began to act. Her first bomb of 250 pounds missed, off the *Sydney's* port bow. The second missed, also off the port bow but nearer. The *Sydney* altered course and steamed over where the second bomb fell. The third bomb missed and dropped off the starboard bow. The *Sydney* straightened her course. The Zepp. then let go three bombs in "rapid fire" which straddled the *Sydney*, two dropping to starboard and one to port. Had the *Sydney* repeated her manœuvre of steaming over where the last bomb fell, I would not be able to finish this story. The *Sydney* next altered course to starboard, this time over where the nearer of the last two bombs to starboard fell. The Zepp. let go two more bombs "rapid fire," missing with both (off the port bow) and causing Captain Dumaresq to say "You can't drop two in one place, old chap." The *Sydney* again steamed over the point where the nearer of the last two bombs had dropped, and the Zepp. again let go a "rapid fire" of yet two more bombs, which duly missed —off the starboard. After the Zepp. had let go her third bomb, the destroyer *Obdurate* joined up with the *Sydney* and asked for orders. Captain Dumaresq replied: "Follow me round." Then, with his back up against the bridge screen, his feet on the base of the compass, and intently watching the Zepp., he remarked, "This fellow is doing some good shooting, but he won't damn well hit us." The signalmen of the *Sydney* had huge grins all over their faces, because they thought the little destroyer was absolutely bound to get all the "overs"—that is to say, those bombs that missed the *Sydney* by dropping astern. However, good fortune or the God of Justice or the *Sydney's* manœuvring favoured the little *Obdurate*, because all she got were two punctures in her funnels and no one wounded.

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While the Zepp. was bombing the *Sydney*, the commander of the *Sydney* was driving would-be spectators down a hatchway under cover. At the same time others were pouring up another hatchway to see all the fun.[3]

A second Zeppelin, which had been sighted during the bombing, had by this time joined up with the first, and signalling commenced between them. As it was most galling to see the *Sydney's* projectiles going straight for the Zeppelins and then turning over before reaching them, Captain Dumaresq ordered "Cease fire." The crew of the *Sydney* now said their good-byes, thinking they had no chance in life of having the good luck to dodge another round of bombs. However, after five minutes both Zeppelins turned towards the German coast, much to the relief of all concerned, and sailed for home.

The *Sydney*, *Dublin*, and destroyers now finished the interrupted work of sweeping "L" Channel, and returned to Rosyth. To show how monotonous the members of the *Sydney's* ship's company considered life in the North Sea, I will relate an incident which happened about four days after this action. On return to harbour four hours' leave was given. A certain stoker who failed to return on board was arrested three days later, and was brought before Captain Dumaresq on a charge of desertion. When asked what he had to say, he answered, "I'm fed up, sir. Nothing ever happens." Captain Dumaresq said: "Nothing ever happens! Why you just had a fight with a Zeppelin; isn't that something happening?" The stoker replied in a most lugubrious voice, "Not one of 'em hit us, sir."

[3] Able Seaman G. Leahy (of Pyrmont, N.S.W.), however, lay on his back on the upper deck, striving to get a good photograph of the Zeppelin with a bomb on the way down. He got a photograph of the Zeppelin (*see plate at p. 293*), but was most annoyed because he could not catch the bomb.

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APPENDIX No. 25.

THE AUSTRALIAN DETACHMENT FOR ZEEBRUGGE.

The action of the 23rd of April, 1918, at Zeebrugge has been too often described to require narration here. But the following particulars concerning the Australian volunteers and their training may be of interest. The men chosen were Engineer-Lieutenant Edgar, Leading Seamen Bush[1] and Rudd,[2] Able Seamen Gillard,[3] Newland,[4] and Staples,[5] and Stokers Bourke,[6] Hopkins,[7] Lockard,[8] McCrory,[9] and Strong.[10]

The following particulars have been supplied by Mr. McCrory, who, after serving in the R.A.N. Bridging Train at Suvla Bay and in Sinai, and in the artillery in France, was transferred at his own request in 1917 to his original service—the Royal Australian Navy:—

On the 23rd of February, 1918, our part of the Grand Fleet returned to Rosyth after forty-eight hours convoying from Bergen to Aberdeen, etc. We were coaling ship, taking in about 2,000 tons and provisions, etc., when we received a wireless asking for volunteers to the number of eleven men for special service. Seamen and stokers were asked to volunteeer. Soon it was seen that all who wished to go would not be accepted, much to their disappointment. Eleven were chosen. They received orders to catch the 9.25 p.m. train from Rosyth Dockyard, *en route* for London; were given two days' leave; and ordered to report to Chatham Dépôt. On arriving we were ordered on board H.M.S. *Hindustan* to start our training. Up to now we knew little or nothing as to what our mission would be. After a

[1] Leading Seaman G. J. Bush, D.S.M. (No. 7018, R.A.N.). Of Manchester, Eng.; b. Islington, London, 19 Oct., 1887.

[2] Leading Seaman D. J. O. Rudd. D.S.M. (No. 3389, R.A.N.). Of Campsie, N.S.W.; b. Sydney, 14 June, 1896.

[3] Able Seaman H. J. Gillard (No. 8517, R.N.). Of Bangor, North Wales; b. New Brighton, Cheshire, Eng., 29 Jan., 1890.

[4] Able Seaman L. T. Newland (No. 1937, R.A.N.). Of South Northcote, Vic.; b. Ballarat, Vic., 16 Aug., 1889.

[5] Leading Seaman G. E. Staples, D.S.M. (No. 2858, R.A.N.). Of Semaphore, S. Aust.; b. Parkside, S. Aust., 20 April, 1896. Died 13 Aug., 1920.

[6] Leading Stoker W. J. Bourke (No. 2237, R.A.N.). Of Perth, W. Aust.; b. Perth, 7 Dec., 1891.

[7] Leading Stoker R. Hopkins (No. 3135, R.A.N.). Of Windsor, Vic.; b. Wyong, N.S.W., 5 Oct., 1893.

[8] Leading Stoker G. J. Lockard (No. 3123, R.A.N.). Of West Marrickville, N.S.W.; b. Sydney, 28 Feb., 1893.

[9] Leading Stoker N. J. McCrory (No. 1183, R.A.N.). Of Surry Hills, N.S.W.; b. Sydney, 24 Jan., 1892.

[10] Leading Stoker J. Strong (No. 2536, R.A.N.). Of Annandale, N.S.W.; b. Gallymont, N.S.W., 10 Nov., 1893.

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few days our jobs came along—the seamen to learn all about trench-warfare, bomb-throwing, and special bayonet-drill; hours of drill at intervals from 5.30 a.m. to 7.30 p.m. Our seamen did their share, and came out with most marks to their credit, after the marines had had a good try to beat them. This was to fit them for the landing from H.M.S. *Vindictive* at the Zeebrugge mole. The *Australia's* stokers joined H.M.S. *Thetis*—their work did not allow for much rifle-drill, but they did their share and learnt their ship from stem to stern. . . .

In the action all the Australian seamen from the *Vindictive* landed on the mole; the five stokers went into action in the *Thetis*, and Mr. Edgar in the *Iris*. All the volunteers from the *Australia* returned safe—she was the only ship that posted no casualty list. Mr. Edgar was very fortunate on board the *Iris*, she being under a fair amount of gun-fire.[11] The means of retreat of the stokers from the *Thetis* was only one life-boat. We had to pull about half-a-mile before we were picked up by a motor-boat—one of the submarine chasers.

[11] Edgar came on deck when the ship was under heavy fire, and, with an engine-room artificer, turned on the smoke apparatus.

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APPENDIX No. 26.

MINES FOUND IN AUSTRALIAN WATERS.

The following discoveries of mines were made:—

S.s. *Cumberland* damaged by mine off Gabo Island, 6 July, 1917	1
Retrieved by mine-sweepers off Gabo Island, 9 October, 1917, to 3 January, 1918	12
Washed up near Falmouth (north-east coast of Tasmania), 21 February, 1918, and exploded	1
Sunk by rifle-fire from s.s. *Kauri* at 33.36 S. 152.54 E., 25 April, 1918	1
Secured 50 miles from Green Cape by s.s. *Kilbaha* on 11 August, 1918; towed to Eden, and exploded by rifle-fire	1
Sunk by rifle-fire from s.s. *Bodalla* off Moruya, 7 November, 1918	1
Sunk by rifle-fire from s.s. *Aeon* off Cape Everard, 23 February, 1919 (mine exploded immediately after sinking)	1
Found washed up on beach at Anna Bay (near Morna Point, Port Stephens), 22 May, 1919, and exploded by rifle-fire[1]	1
Exploded itself by impact on rocks south-west of Cape Everard, 29 May, 1919[2]	1
Washed up and eventually burnt out on beach at Cape Flattery (north of Cooktown, Queensland), 1 September, 1919	1
Swept up off Cape Everard by sloops, 8-20 September, 1919	1
Exploded by rifle-fire from s.s. *Tarcoola* off Cape Everard, 10 October, 1919	1
Towed ashore by two aboriginals at Dove Island, Torres Straits, December, 1919, and subsequently destroyed with gelignite	1
Found washed up on 19 February, 1920, and eventually burnt out near Camden Haven Headland	1
Found washed up near Noosa Heads, Tewantin, Queensland, 19 February, 1921, and eventually burnt out	1
Swept up by the trawler *Koraaga* when at work 14 miles east by south of Cape Everard on 24 October, 1929. The mine was then harmless	1
Total	27

[1] The remains of this mine are in the Australian War Memorial Museum.

[2] This mine had previously been observed by Mr. W. Jemmeson. It was heard to explode at 6 p.m. on 29 May on Clinton Rocks, five miles from Cape Everard. Nothing could afterwards be found of it except a wire mooring-rope, which is now in the Australian War Memorial Museum.

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APPENDICES—PART III.

OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS.

No. 27.

PROCLAMATION TRANSFERRING THE AUSTRALIAN NAVY TO ADMIRALTY CONTROL.

ORDER

Australia to wit.
R. M. FERGUSON,
Governor-General.

By His Excellency the Right Honorable Sir Ronald Craufurd Munro Ferguson, a Member of His Majesty's Most Honorable Privy Council, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief of the Commonwealth of Australia.

WHEREAS a state of war exists between His Majesty the King and the German Emperor:

And whereas by the *Naval Defence Act* 1910-1912 it is amongst other things enacted that the Governor-General may transfer to the King's Naval Forces any vessel of the Commonwealth Naval Forces and any officers or seamen of the Commonwealth Naval Forces:

And whereas it is deemed expedient to transfer to the King's Naval Forces all the vessels of the Commonwealth Naval Forces and all officers and seamen of those vessels:

Now therefore I, Sir Ronald Craufurd Munro Ferguson, the Governor-General aforesaid, acting with the advice of the Federal Executive Council, do hereby order that from and after the publication of this Order all the vessels of the Commonwealth Naval Forces, and all the officers and seamen of those vessels, shall be transferred to the King's Naval Forces, and that such transfer shall continue in force until the issue of a Proclamation declaring that the aforementioned war no longer exists.

Given under my Hand and the Seal of the Commonwealth this tenth day of August, One thousand nine hundred and fourteen, in the fifth year of His Majesty's reign.

By His Excellency's Command,

(L.S.) E. D. MILLEN,
Minister of State for Defence.

GOD SAVE THE KING!

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APPENDIX No. 28.

LETTER FROM HERR TÖLKE TO ADMIRAL PATEY.[1]

An

den Admiral der in Rabaul und Umgegend verweilenden englischen Kriegsschiffe.

Dem Unterzeichneten steht als Bezirksamtmann von Rabaul die Verwaltung der Stadt Rabaul zu.

Auf das mir zur Weiterbeförderung an den Herrn Gouverneur übergebene Schreiben teile ich mit, dass sich in und bei Rabaul keine Telefunkenstation befindet. Ich bin nicht in der Lage irgend welche Einwirkung auf den Betrieb der Telefunkenstation auszuüben, insbesondere nicht das Weiterarbeiten derselben zu verhindern. Die angedrohte Beschiessung der unverteidigten Stadt Rabaul würde allem Völkerrecht widersprechen.

Das Schreiben habe ich an das Gouverneur weitergeleitet und werde, sowie Antwort eintrifft, dieselbe mitteilen.

Rabaul, den 12 August 1914.

Der kaiserliche Bezirksamtmann:

TÖLKE.

[1] *See pp. 13-14.*

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APPENDIX No. 29.

OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE CAPTURE OF SAMOA.

Admiral Patey's letter to the German Governor.

His Britannic Majesty's Australian
Ship *Australia*,
off Apia, 30 August 1914.

Your Excellency,

I have the honour to inform you that I am off the Port of Apia with an overwhelming force, and, in order to avoid unnecessary bloodshed, I will not open fire if you surrender immediately.

2. I therefore summon you to surrender to me forthwith the town of Apia, and the Imperial possessions under your control.

3. An answer must be delivered within half-an-hour to the Bearer.

4. Wireless communications are to cease instantly or fire will be opened on the Station.

5. If no answer is received to this letter, or if the answer is in the negative, the Cruisers have orders to cover the landing parties with their guns.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your Excellency's obedient Servant,

GEORGE E. PATEY,
Rear-Admiral Commanding Ships and Vessels of the Allied Fleets.

His Excellency the Governor,
The Imperial Station,
Apia.

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Acting Governor's reply, dated 30th August, 1914.

ADDRESS:—An

den Herrn Oberbefehlshaber des vereinigten Geschwaders
vor Apia.

Text: (heading as above).

Euer Excellenz

Beehre ich mich folgendes im Auftrage des kaiserlichen Gouverneurs zu erwidern.

Nach den Grundsätzen des Völkerrechts ins besondere den Abmachungen der II Haeger Friedens-Konferenz ist die Beschiessung unverdeitigter (*sic*) Häfen und Plätze verboten ebenso daher auch die Androhung einer solchen. Ich lege daher gegen Euerer Excellenz Verfahren ergebenst Protest ein. Im Uebrigen habe ich, um den von Ihnen angekündigten militärischen Massnahmen vorzubeugen, angeordnet, dass der funkentelegraphische Dienst einzustellen und dass keinerlei Widerstand zu leisten sei.

Ich stelle Euerer Excellenz anheim, dass (*sic*) Schutzgebiet Samoa zu besetzen und bemerke noch ergebenst, dass Euerer Excellenz damit auch die Verantwortung für Leben und Eigentum der europäischen Bevölkerung zu übernehmen haben werden.

Mit der Versicherung meiner vorzüglichsten Hochachtung habe ich die Ehre zu sein Euerer Excellenz ergebener

S. N. Rimburg,
stellvertretender Gouverneur.

[*Translation.*]

To the Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Squadron off Apia.

Your Excellency,

I have the honour to reply as follows by order of the Imperial Governor.

According to the principles of international law, especially the agreements of the 2nd Hague Peace Conference, the bombardment of undefended harbours and towns is forbidden, and therefore also the threat of bombardment. I therefore respectfully enter protest against

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Your Excellency's action. For the rest, to avoid the military measures of which you have given notice, I have given orders that the W/T Service is to be discontinued, and that no resistance of any sort is to be offered.

I leave it to Your Excellency to take possession of the Protectorate of Samoa, and only beg to observe that Your Excellency must also take over the responsibility for the life and property of the European population.

With the assurance of my deepest respect,

I have the honour to be,

Your Excellency's obedient servant,

S. N. RIMBURG,
Acting Governor.

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APPENDIX No. 30.

OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS *RE* OCCUPATION OF NEW BRITAIN.

Adm. Patey's Letter to Governor of German New Guinea.

H.M.A.S. *Australia,* at Simpsonhafen, New Britain,
11th September 1914.[1]

Your Excellency,

I have the honour to inform you that I have arrived at Simpsonhafen with the intention of occupying Herbertshöhe, Rabaul, and the Island of New Britain.

I will point out to Your Excellency that the force at my command is so large as to render useless any opposition on your part, and such resistance can only result in unnecessary bloodshed.

With regard to this, I hereby inform Your Excellency that I shall consider further communications by you with your Naval Forces, by means of your wireless telegraphy, as an hostile act. Such communications must cease immediately.

I therefore desire that the town of Rabaul[2] and the Dependencies under your control should be surrendered to me forthwith.

An answer should be delivered to the bearer without delay.

If you do not intend to offer resistance you should so inform me, and give me assurance with regard to any submarine mines that may have been laid in the harbours. Your Excellency will also be good enough to state when you will interview me or my representative with the object of transferring control.

It is desirable in the interests of yourself and of the inhabitants that this should be arranged as soon as possible.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your Excellency's obedient servant,

GEORGE E. PATEY,

Rear-Admiral Commanding H.M. Australian Fleet.

His Excellency the Governor, Rabaul.

[1] The month and year only were shown in the original documents, viz., "September, 1914," but all copies in the official records bear the full date.

[2] The copies in the official records show "Herbertshöhe." Patey was under the impression that Herbertshöhe was still the capital, and cited it as such in later documents (*see letters on pp. 603-6*). It appears possible that in the case of the first letter the draft was altered, before final typing, by some member of the staff who was aware that Rabaul was now the capital.

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Patey's Letter in German[3] *(as sent to Governor Haber).*

Seine Britannische Majestäts
Australische Kriegschiff *Australia*,
vor Simpsonhafen,
11 September 1914.

Euer Herrlichkeit,

Ehre ich mich folgendes zu erwideren, dass ich an Simpsonhafen angekommen bin um Herbertshöhe, Rabaul, und Neu Pommern, in Besitz zu nehmen.

Ich stelle Euer Herrlichkeit vor, dass es nutzlos sei Widerstand zu leisten, da ich eine überwaltige Heere unter mein Befehl habe. Ins Übrigen wird ein solche Widerstand der Grund vermeidliche Blutvergiessen.

In Anbetracht dieses, stelle ich Euer Herrlichkeit vor, der Telefunkendienst mit Eure Schiffe und Seetruppen so fort einzustellen, sonst werde ich es wie Feindseligesthat betrachten.

Deshalb vorfordere ich Ihnen, mir den Stadt Rabaul, und die Kaiserliche Besitzen die unter Euer Befehl stehen, sogleich überzugeben.

Die Antwort muss ohne Aufschub dem Überbringer gegeben worden.

Wenn Sie entscheiden keinerlei Widerstand zu leisten, müssen Sie es mir sofort bekannt machen, auch gebuhrt es Ihnen mir zu versicheren ob Unterseeischeminen sich in die Hafen befinden.

Damit ich der Befehl ubernehmen kann, bemerke ich ergebenst dass Euer Herrlichkeit mir bekundigen, wenn Sie zu bequemer Zeit mit mir oder mit meinen Vertreter beratschlagen konnen.

Auch in Euer Interesse, und den Interesse der Bevolkerung, ist es wichtig einen Ausgleich so schnell wie moglich zu treffen.

Mit der Versicherung meiner vorzüglichsten Hochachtung habe ich die Ehre zu sein.

Euer Herrlichkeit
ergebener,

George E. Patey,
Contre-Admiral der Schiffe Seine
Britannische Majestäts Australische Flotte.

Seine Herrlichkeit
der Gouverneur,
des Kaiserlichen Station Rabaul.

[3] The rendering into German of this and Patey's other letters appears somewhat crude, but was sufficiently intelligible for its purpose.

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Haber's Reply to Patey.

Kaiserlicher Gouverneur
von Deutsch-Neuguinea.

Toma, den 11 September 1914.

Euer Exzellenz Note vom heutigen Tage habe ich die Ehre gehabt zu erhalten.

Die Schutzgewalt in den deutschen Schutzgebieten steht Seiner Majestät dem Kaiser im Namen des Reichs zu. In meiner Eigenschaft als Vertreter des Kaiserlichen Gouverneurs bin ich daher nicht befugt, Euer Exzellenz das Schutzgebiet zu übergeben. Auch scheint es mir untunlich, Verhandlungen über einen *modus vivendi* während des Kriegszustandes zu beginnen, nachdem Euer Exzellenz bereits die Feindseligkeiten eröffnet haben. Aus dem gleichen Grunde bin ich auch genötigt, mich einer Einwirkung auf den funkentelegraphischen Verkehr zu enthalten.

Ich habe davon Kenntnis genommen, dass Euer Exzellenz beabsichtigen, die Orte Rabaul und Herbertshöhe militärisch zu besetzen. Beide Orte und ihre Weichbilder sind unverteidigt. Frauen und Kinder befinden sich darin. Die Bürger gehen ruhig ihren Geschäften nach. Auch befinden sich, wie ich ausdrücklich versichere, im Hafen von Rabaul und auf der Rhede von Herbertshöhe keine Seeminen. Ich würde es daher mit Dank erkennen, wenn Euer Exzellenz sich feindlicher Akte gegen die genannten Orte enthalten und den örtlichen Verwaltungsbehörden gestatten würden auch nach der Besetzung durch Euer Exzellenz Truppen für die öffentliche Ordnung und Sicherheit zu sorgen.

Ich benutze ger diese Gelegenheit, Euer Exzellenz der ausgezeichneten Hochachtung zu versichern in der ich die Ehre habe zu sein

E. Haber,
Vertreter des Gouverneurs
von Deutsch-Neuguinea.

An den Herrn Befehlshaber
S.B.M. Australischen Geschwaders
Contre Admiral Patty
Exzellenz.

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[*Translation.*]

Imperial Governor of
German New Guinea.

Toma, 11th September, 1914.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Your Excellency's letter of to-day.

The administration of the German Protectorates devolves on His Majesty the Kaiser in the name of the Empire. In my capacity as Acting Governor, I have not the authority to surrender the Protectorates to Your Excellency. Also, it appears to me impossible to open negotiations about a *modus vivendi* during the state of war which exists, since Your Excellency has already opened hostilities. For the same reason I am also compelled to abstain from any interference with wireless operations.

I have noted the fact that Your Excellency contemplates a military occupation of Rabaul and Herbertshöhe. Both places and their precincts are unprotected. There are women and children there. The townspeople are going peacefully about their business. Also you have my explicit assurance that there are no mines in the harbour of Rabaul and the roadstead of Herbertshöhe. I should, therefore, be glad if Your Excellency would refrain from hostile operations against the said places, and would permit the local administration, even after occupation by Your Excellency's troops, to look after the public order and safety.

I take this opportunity to assure Your Excellency of my highest esteem.

I have the honour to be,

E. Haber,
Acting Governor of New Guinea.

His Excellency Rear-Admiral Patey,
Commander-in-Chief of
His Britannic Majesty's Australian Fleet.

Patey to Haber.

H.M.A.S. *Australia,*
at Rabaul.
12th September 1914.

Your Excellency,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 11th September 1914.

With regard to the statement therein as to my having already opened hostilities, I would point out to Your Excellency that my letter was sent ashore at 7.0 a.m. on 11th

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September. Owing, however, to Your Excellency having proceeded to Toma, I was unable to get into communication with any representative of your Government except by sending to Toma. Consequently your answer did not reach me until 6.0 p.m. on that day.

I would remark that if Your Excellency had arranged an effective means of communication between Toma, where you had gone, and Herbertshöhe, which I understand was still then the seat of your Government,[4] it should not have taken eleven hours to exchange letters over a distance of under 20 miles.

The responsibility for the greater part of the fighting that has occurred must lie upon the lack of a proper means of communication between your seat of Government and the locality selected by Your Excellency as a residence at the time the British Forces appeared—and moreover Your Excellency continued to allow your wireless installation to be used for hostile purposes despite my written warning to you, contained in the third paragraph of my letter of 11th September, that this was to cease.

With regard to your statement that the areas of jurisdiction of Rabaul and Herbertshöhe are unprotected, I have in my possession a document[5] signed by Sub-Commander von Klewitz detailing Military Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers, by name, to act with the armed forces at Bebra, Paparatava, Raluana, and Luttick—one of the Officers named thereon—is at present a prisoner. The date of this document is 21st August 1914. Moreover the ground fought over on 11th September was trenched and mined. It therefore appears either that you were unaware of the actions of Sub-Commander von Klewitz or that that Officer acted contrary to your orders. Your Excellency's attention is invited to the point involved.

Communications as to transferring control of the Administration should now be addressed to Colonel Holmes, Brigadier of the Occupying Force, who will administer the Government.

[4] Herbertshöhe had, as a matter of fact, ceased to be the seat of government when Rabaul became the capital in 1910.

[5] *See Appendix No. 13.*

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I have sent that Officer a copy of your letter to me and of this reply.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your Excellency's obedient servant,
GEORGE E. PATEY,
Rear-Admiral Commanding H.M. Australian Fleet.

His Excellency,
The Governor of
German New Guinea.

German version (as sent to Governor Haber).

S.B.M. Australische Kriegschiff ***Australia,***
vor Simpsonhafen.
12 September 1914.

Euer Herrlichkeit,

Note vom 11 September habe ich die Ehre gehabt zu erhalten.

In Anbetracht Euer Excellenz Behauptung dass ich bereitz die Feindselig-keiten eröffnet habe, stelle ich Euer Excellenz vor dass meine Brief um sieben Uhr Morgens des elften September ans Land gebracht geworden ist, aber Euer Excellenz war schon nach Toma gegangen.

Infolge dieses Umstandes war es für mich mur möglich mit einen Vertreter des Reiches zu untereden (*sic*) wenn ich nach Toma schickte. Folglich ist Euer Excellenz Antwort mir nicht bis sechs Uhr Abends des elften angekommen.

Auch stelle ich Euer Excellenz vor, dass hatten Sie ein wirkendes Verbindung zwischen Toma, wo Sie gegangen sind, und Herbertshöhe, die fruherer Sitz der Regieruing (*sic*), eingerichtet wurde es nicht elf Stunden daueren ein note nach Toma und zurück (30 kilometres) zu senden.

Dafur ist das Kampfen, dass bereits Statt gefunden hat, das Ergebniss des Bedurfniss eine wirkende Verbindung zwischen der Sitz der Regierung und Euer Excellenz Residenz nach Ankunft der Britische Seetruppen. Auch hat Euer Excellenz eine feindliche Sinwirkung (*sic*) auf den F/T Verkehr nicht enthalten, trotz meine schrifftliche Aufkundigung (siehe dritte Paragraph meiner Note des 11 September).

In Anbetracht Euer Erwiderung dass die Orte Rabaul und Herbertshöhe und ihre Weichbilder unverteidigt sind. Ich habe in Besitz eine von Unter-Commandant von Klewitz unter-schriebener Detaillieranweisung. Es gibt in die besagte Anweisung die Nahmen von Offiziere und Unter-Offiziere die detailliert sind militarische Dienst

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mit Truppen bei Bebra, Paparatava, Raluana, und Luttick zu machen. Eine die besagten Offiziere ist gefangen genommen. Der besagte Anweisung ist vom 21 August. Auch ist der Kriegsplatz des 11 September durch Minen und Laufgraben befestigt. Daher, scheint es mir, Herr Unter-Commandant von Klewitz hat entweder ohne Euer Kenntnis, oder im Widerstand Euer Befehl, diese Thäte vollgebracht.

Ich stelle die vorgehende Gegenstand Euer Excellenz vor. Briefe in Anbetracht der Übernehmung des Verwaltungsbehorde mussen an "Colonel Holmes, Brigadier of the Occupying Forces," adressiert. Colonel Holmes wird der Regierung versehen.

Ich bis diesem Offizier einen Abschrift auch von Euer note des 11 September und von meine Antwort derselben, schicken.

Mit der Versicherung meiner vorzuglichsten Hochachtung habe ich die Ehre zu sein

Euer Excellenz

ergebener

GEORGE E. PATEY,

S.B.M. Australische Flotte.

Der Kaiserliche Gouverneur
von
Deutsch-Neuguinea.

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APPENDIX No. 31.

OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS *RE* OCCUPATION OF FRIEDRICH WILHELMSHAFEN.

Admiral Patey to the Officer Commanding at Friedrich Wilhelmshafen.

Australia,
Friedrich Wilhelmshafen,
24 September 1914.

Your Excellency,

His Excellency Herr E. Haber, Acting Governor of the German Possessions known as Deutsch Neu Guinea, has entered into an agreement with the representative of the British Government in the terms given in the attached copy.

I therefore call upon you to transfer your sub-administration in accordance with the terms of the said agreement.

In the event of resistance being offered by you, I would point out that it is contrary to the terms of the said agreement; and, moreover, I have ample force at my disposal to render useless any opposition you can offer, and armed resistance will only entail useless bloodshed.

I therefore desire that you will inform me as to your intentions without delay, and give me assurance with regard to any submarine mines that may have been laid in the harbours.

Will you please be good enough to state when you will interview the Administrator of the Force of Occupation or his representative? It is desirable in the interests of yourself and of the inhabitants that this should be arranged as soon as possible.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your Excellency's obedient servant,

GEORGE E. PATEY,
Vice-Admiral Commanding Ships and Vessels
of the Allied Fleets.

His Excellency
The Officer Representing
The Government of Deutsch Neu Guinea,
at Friedrich Wilhelmshafen.

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German version of Admiral Patey's Letter.

S.B.M. Australische Schiffe,
Australia,
Friedrich Wilhelmshafen,
24 September 1914.

Euer Excellenz,

Seine Excellenz Herr E. Haber, Vertreter des Gouverneurs der Deutschen Gebiete von Deutsch Neu Guinea, hat mit den Vertreter des Britischen Regierung einen Abkommen getroffen. Hiermit ist Abschrift die gesagten Bedingungen.

In Anbetracht dieses, vorfordere ich Ihnen, in Ansehung die Bedingungen der gesagten Kapitulation die Verwaltungsbehörde zu übertragen.

In Falle dass von Ihnen mir Widerstand geleistet wird, stelle ich Euch vor dass es die Bedingungen der gesageten Kapitulation zuwider ist; auch stelle ich Euer Excellenz vor dass es nutzlos sei Widerstand zu leisten, da ich eine überwaltige Heere unter mein Befehl habe. Ins Übrigen wurde ein solche Widerstand der Grund verneidliche Blutvergiessen.

Deretwegen gebuhrt es Ihnen mir so schnell wie moglich bekannt zu machen, was fur Schritte sie zu nehmen beabsichtigen, auch mussen Sie mir versicheren ob Unterseeischeminen sich in Euer Hafen befinden.

Bemerke ich noch ergebenst dass Euer Excellenz mir bekundigt wenn Sie zu bequemer Zeit, entweder mit der Administrator der Occupationarmee, oder mit seinen Vertreter, beratschlagen konnen.

Auch in Euer Interesse und in den Interesse der Bevolkerung ist es wichtig einen Ausgleich so schnell wie moglich zu treffen.

Mit der Versicherung meiner verzuglichsten Hochachtung, habe ich die Ehre zu sein

Euer Excellenz
ergebener

George E. Patey,

Vice-Admiral der Schiffe
S.B.M. Australische Flotte.

Seine Excellenz
Der Vertreter des Kaiserlichen Station
Deutsch Neu Guinea,
Friedrich Wilhelmshafen.

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APPENDIX No. 32.

CONGRATULATIONS FROM NEW ZEALAND.

Wellington,
7th October, 1914.

My Lord,

I am anxious to tell your Excellency, on behalf of myself, my Government, and the people of New Zealand, that we much appreciated the privilege of being associated with the officers and men of the Royal Australian Navy in the operations connected with the capture of Samoa.

We have read with pride of the manner in which your Expeditionary Force, assisted by the Australian Fleet, has so successfully and gallantly occupied the enemy's territory in and about the Bismarck Archipelago.

The Expeditionary Force which New Zealand is now preparing to put at the service of the Mother Country is looking forward to joining their Australian comrades in the great Imperial operations in Europe.

I have the honour to be.

My Lord,

Your Excellency's most obedient servant.

LIVERPOOL, Governor.

His Excellency
The Governor-General
of the Commonwealth of Australia,
Melbourne.

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APPENDICES—PART IV.

No. 33.

THE DISBANDMENT OF THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVAL BRIDGING TRAIN.

The fact that the Train, though composed mainly of naval trainees and enlisted as a naval force,[1] was placed in other respects under the military authorities produced awkward results. During the latter months of 1916 certain members of the unit who had not yet worked under fire wearied of their comparatively peaceful duties on the Canal, and voiced their discontent in letters to Australia which came to the knowledge of the Defence Department. Taking these letters as representative, the Department wrote to the Naval Board:—

> It appears that the men are engaged on duty which could be performed by any non-combatant unit, and they are very desirous of going to the front to take part in the actual fighting. Failing their being sent to France, they ask that their services should be utilised in manning ships, carrying coal, or anything necessary to the Fleet—as most of them, it seems, are seamen.

The Board replied that the men could not be utilised for reliefs to H.M.A. ships; if no longer required as a Bridging Train, the unit should be disbanded, and its members either sent as reinforcements to the Australian Engineers or Artillery, or brought back to Australia.

The Defence Department referred the matter to the War Office, mentioning the fact that representations had been made that the Train was employed on "non-combatant" work, which could be done by civilians. The G.O.C. Egypt took exception to the term "non-combatant"; the War Office, forwarding his opinion to Australia, said that the unit "had been employed exclusively upon work of an important military nature."

In the unit itself the discontent of some of the new arrivals was no secret, and the C.O. had more than once suggested that they should be transferred to the fighting line; but at the moment it was considered inadvisable to allow transfers in any section of the army, lest they should be used as precedents for other transfers of a more objectionable character. As for the action taken in Australia, he was given no information at all. On the 12th of January, 1917, he was told that the Train was to be relieved of Canal work and attached to the forces advancing into Palestine for duty along the beaches; the El Arish detachment was accordingly ordered to prepare to make a base there for the unit's headquarters, and the rest of January was spent in turning over the Canal work to reliefs and returning stores and material to dépôts and bases. On the 8th of February, however, the C.O. was informed that only part of the existing unit would be required for the beach duties, and was advised to find out how the men could best be redistributed. He therefore asked all detachments to elect whether they would—

(*a*) transfer to the A.I.F.,
(*b*) transfer to the Royal Navy, or
(*c*) remain with the unit, preserving its identity.

76 chose the A.I.F., 43 the Navy, and 130 preferred to stay where they were.

[1] The attestation paper used for the Train enlisted the recruits in "the Naval Forces of the Commonwealth," and was attested by "a Commissioned Naval Officer."

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What happened then is not at all clear. On the 18th of February the War Office sent the Defence Department a telegram not easily reconciled with the figures just given:

Recommend that personnel of Australian Naval Bridging Train be transferred to Australian army, with exception of 4 officers and 80 other ratings who will be retained in unit reorganised in two sections—one consisting of skilled engineers and kindred trades, and one of expert pier-builders and shore-workers. Personnel transferred to Australian army would be posted to whichever arm they are best suited. Anyone not accepting transfer to be discharged and returned to Australia.

The Australian Government concurred, adding that it would be pleased if all personnel could be absorbed in Australian Imperial Force or appointed for service in Royal Australian Navy. (Yet the Naval Board had already declined to use the men for seagoing service.)

On the 5th of March, the same day on which this telegram was sent, Lieutenant-Commander Bracegirdle was relieved of his command and appointed O.C. troops in the transport *Willochra*.

On the 20th the Train was accordingly informed that it was to be disbanded, and instead of it a new force, an "Army Troops Company, Australian Engineers, A.I.F.," was to be attached to the expedition advancing against Palestine. The rest must either volunteer for other work in the A.I.F. or return to Australia "for service in the Royal Australian Navy there or elsewhere." When these alternatives were put to the unit on the 22nd, the answer was decisive. The volunteering results were:

For return to Australia to join R.A.N.	153[2]
For transfer to Australian Artillery	43
For transfer to Australian Infantry	4
For transfer to Australian Light Horse	1
To remain in new Troops Company	2

On the 27th volunteers were again called for on the following basis:—

Volunteers to be transferred to unallotted reinforcements of any arm of the A.I.F.

Remainder to be returned to Australia for service in the R.A.N.[3]

The volunteering produced practically a replica of the previous list: about 50 men were willing to join the A.I.F., the rest preferred to go back to service in the R.A.N. On the 29th of May 6 officers and 177 other ratings embarked at Suez; they reached Melbourne on the 10th of July, were distributed to their several States, given leave—and discharged.[4] The men who returned had been assured that a chance of further naval service would be given them. But on arrival in Melbourne they were informed by request of the Board (which at that time knew nothing about the offer made in Egypt) that

volunteers are required for the R.A.N. for the period of the war. Previous service in either the R.N. or R.A.N. is essential for entry into the R.A.N.

---

[2] Note the decrease in numbers volunteering for the A.I.F. as soon as they were offered a chance of joining the R.A.N.

[3] Seamen and firemen to the number of 40 were required for river work in Mesopotamia; but this proposal was "purely tentative," and nothing came of it.

[4] To prevent confusion it must be noted that the numbers given above do not altogether correspond with those found in official documents of the Defence Department. A Defence memorandum of 15 November, 1917, says that 1 officer and 97 ratings accepted transfer to the A.I.F., and 9 officers and 194 others returned to Australia "for disposal."

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Those not so qualified—the great majority—were urged by the military authorities to transfer to infantry reinforcements. As soon as the Naval Board was informed of the Egyptian offer for service in the R.A.N., it decided that

> volunteers of good character, not selected for the R.A.N. or R.A.N.B. staff, could be sworn in to serve in the Commonwealth Naval Forces for the period of the war . . . to relieve a corresponding number of trainees who are at present serving under Proclamation.

This decision was given on the 16th of July, 1917; but it was not till the end of November that it could be carried into effect, and by that time the remainder of the unit had dispersed beyond recall.

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Ships in the Australian coastal service, ships of the Commonwealth Government Line, and ex-enemy vessels which traded for the Australian Government are marked with an asterisk.

Abbreviations:

A.M.C.	Armed Merchant Cruiser.	m.v.	Motor Vessel.
B.	Battleship.	S/M.	Submarine.
B. Cr.	Battle Cruiser.	s.s.	Steamship.
Cr.	Cruiser.	s.v.	Sailing Vessel.
G.B.	Gunboat.	T.B.	Torpedo Boat.
L. Cr.	Light Cruiser.	T.B.D.	Destroyer.

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